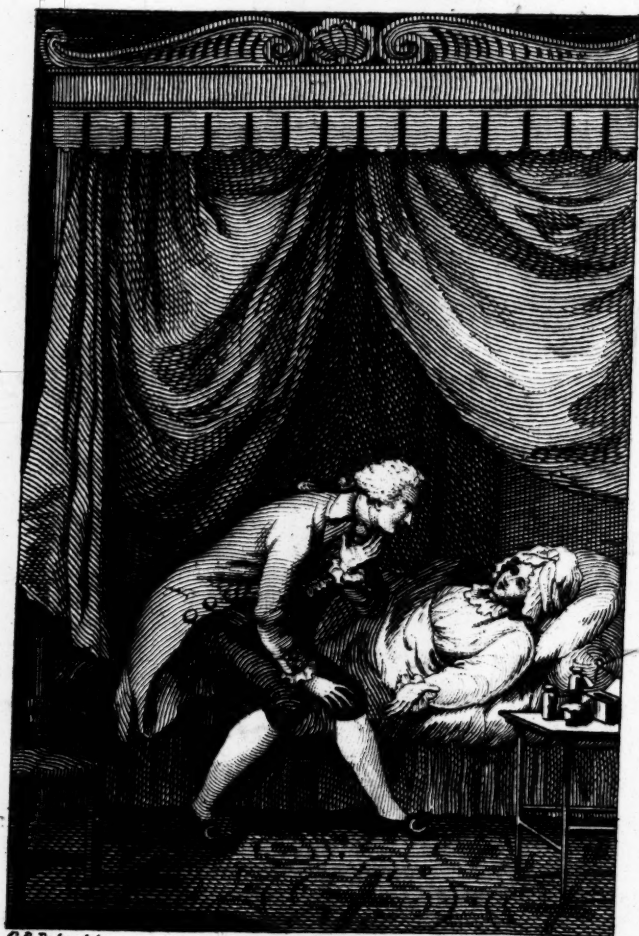


THE WIDOWER.



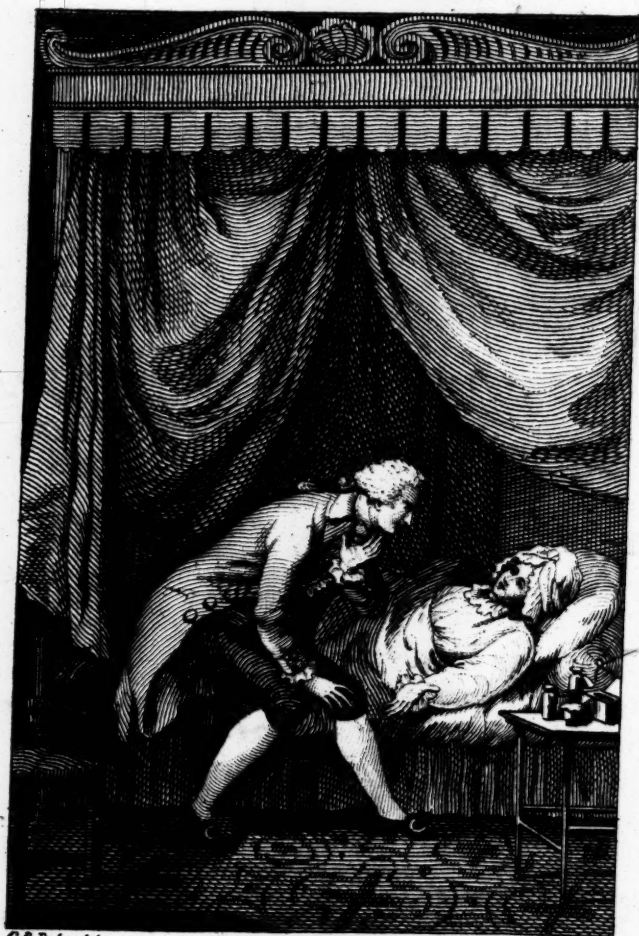
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Vol

THE
FRIEND OF YOUTH;
BEING A SEQUEL TO THE
CHILDREN'S FRIEND;

AND LIKE THAT WORK,
CONSISTING OF
APT STORIES, ENTERTAINING DIALOGUES,
AND
MORAL DRAMAS;

ALL INTENDED
To excite Attention, cherish feeling, and inculcate Virtue
IN THE
RISING GENERATION;

Partly translated from Mr. BERQUIN, and other French
and German Writers, and partly Original
being written by the Editor himself,

The Rev. MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

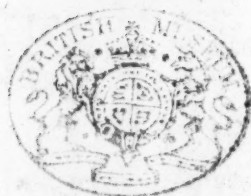
Embellished with
COPPER PLATES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for T. HOOKHAM, in New Bond Street.

D, MCC, LXXXVIII.



T I M E L O S T,

A N D

AFTERWARDS REGAINED.

THE parents of young Lucian were engaged in such a multiplicity of business, that they could not possibly attend themselves in any manner to his education. They were told of an academy, not far from London, that had turned out many scholars eminent for their abilities and probity, the master of it taking every method to endow the minds of such as were entrusted to his care, with principles of virtue and morality. Though the academy was upwards of two hundred miles from their abode, yet Lucian's father was prevailed upon to place him in this seminary, and recommended his improvement in a very earnest manner to the master, who considering all his pupils as his children, spared no trouble to correct them of their faults, excite them by encouragement to industry, and plant within their minds the seed of probity and honour. Those appointed under him, as ushers, did their utmost, likewise, to assist him in so laudable a care.

These efforts, notwithstanding, with respect to Lucian, failed of their desired success; for

Lucian had a dissipated turn, that while the best instructions were communicated, made him utterly forget them, the next moment. In the hours of study he would let his thoughts in such a manner wander, that he could not bring them back again to the instructions of his masters. Every duty he should have attended to, was sacrificed to frivolous amusements. He gave tokens of the same propensity to indolence, and want of forethought, in his looks and person. His whole dress was generally in disorder; and though every one acknowledged he was handsome, yet he could not possibly be looked at, without some emotion of disgust.

It is not difficult to guess how hurtful these defects were to his progress. There was not an individual in the school, but got before him. Nay, the very least, who were received into the school a long time after, gave the clearest proofs that they should very soon excel him: and, accordingly, they looked on Lucian with contempt. Whenever people of distinction came to visit the academy, his master took the greatest care to keep him out of sight, that his unseemliness and ignorance might not affect the reputation of the school. His master never wished him to make one among the scholars, that were every year competitors to gain the prize proposed for such as should have made the greatest progress. Lucian's ignorance was of itself sufficient to disgrace the academy.

All

AFTERWARDS REGAINED. 5

All these humiliating circumstances did not make the least impression on him. He was always the same character of inconstance, indolence, and dissipation.

His preceptors gave him up for lost, and their endeavours to improve him, every day grew less and less. They often said, in conversation with each other, poor dear Lucian! how solicitous he seems to be unhappy! What will his afflicted parents say, when he returns from school, so thinly stocked with learning, and so full of faults?

Two years had now elapsed, without his having made the least improvement; when, one morning, he received a letter sealed with black. He opened it, and read as follows:

“ DEAREST SON,

Your father died this morning. Providence has taken him from us. In my husband, I have lost my guardian and my friend; and now 'tis you alone that have it in your power to comfort my poor heart, by showing me you have such thoughts as are entitled to my love. But if you should deceive me, if, in future, I should find I must renounce that pleasing expectation of beholding my departed husband's virtues flourish in your heart, my sorrow and despair infallibly will kill me. By the coachman, who delivers you this letter, I have sent your father's picture: wear it always round your neck, and frequently look at it, that the

2 A 3

fight

sight of one who so much loved you, may beget a wish within your heart of imitating his uncommon virtues. I shall leave you where you are these ten months yet to come, that you may properly complete your education. In the mean time, think my destiny depends upon your conduct; and, be sure your wretched mother cannot have a minute's happiness, but through your good behaviour."

Lucian's disposition had not stifled in his heart, as yet, the sentiments of nature; and no sooner had he read this letter, than these sentiments were all at once awakened in him. He burst out into a flood of tears, and with a voice, by frequent sighings interrupted, said, my father! my dear father! I have lost you, then, for ever! He gazed ardently upon the portrait, pressed it to his bosom, kissed the likeness, and addressed it to the following purpose: Author of my life! dear father! have you put yourself to such expence to give me education, and have I been so unworthy, as to let it be all thrown away. So good a father you! and I — unworthy to be called your son.

He passed the remnant of the day in weeping bitterly, and went to bed betimes; but all night long, did nothing in the world but turn on one side first, and after on the other. Sleep was very distant from him. He imagined he beheld

AFTERWARDS REGAINED.

7

beheld his father's ghost thus terribly address him:

Miserable child! I scrupled not to sacrifice my life, that I might see you happy, and on your side, you dishonour your afflicted father by the conduct you indulge in!

He then thought of his poor mother, and the sorrow he should bring upon her head, instead of all that consolation she expected from him. When I come before her, said he to himself, and have no other evidences to produce, than those of my instructors, which will certainly be all against me,—when the pride of her maternal heart shall think of reaping honour from the education she has let me have, but I, by my appearance, make her blush.—Oh heaven, my poor dear mother! I shall surely be her death. Had I but profited by the instructions lavished on me! could I but redeem the precious time I have till now neglected!

It was thus poor Lucian grieved by reason of his past behaviour. It was thus, he bathed his bed, as the expression is, with tears.

Next day, betimes, he rose; repaired that instant to the master's room, knelt down, and said as follows: You behold, sir, an unhappy youth before you. I have scorned your father-like instructions. I have never learned what I was sent here to acquire. Take pity on me, sir; assist a resolution I have formed, or I shall kill my mother.

Lucian's

Lucian's master was affected in a powerful manner at this language, and embraced him. My dear little friend, said he, since you are sensible how great a fault you have committed, you may yet amend it. You experience, I believe, how sad a circumstance it is, that any one should have to blame himself, by reason of his conduct. After this conviction, you will be no less than guilty, if you persevere in your behaviour; but before, you were but blameable. You have entirely lost two years; and now there are but ten months left to make up for your loss. Judge then, what efforts you should make. However, you must not despair. With perseverance, there is nothing in the world but what you may achieve. Begin this very moment, then. Come to me every day. I shall be very happy to contribute to your progress; so that for the time to come, you may express yourself as pleased with your improvement, as at present you are discontented with your want of knowledge.

Lucian could not better thank his master, than by falling on the bed, and kissing him.

He ran that moment to his chamber; locked himself in, and began to con his lesson. On the following days, he did the same. His teachers, now astonished at his application, undertook, with joy, the culture of his talents. His companions, who had hitherto beheld him with such scorn, soon changed their notions, and began to love him. Thus
encou-

AFTERWARDS REGAINED. 9

encouraged, Lucian every day renewed his vigilance and ardour. He was now no longer that perverse and wicked child, who formerly renounced his duty, for the sake of foolish dissipation. It was necessary now to force him from his study, for the sake of necessary recreation. Order and propriety succeeded in the place of negligence. He felt at times, 'tis true, an inclination to his first defects; but nothing more was necessary for him than a glance upon his father's portrait, to confirm his better resolutions.

In the end, those ten months which his mother had allowed him to complete his education in, expired. He saw them flow away with great rapidity, because he filled up every moment with some useful study or another.

And at last, when he was summoned home, the change that had been operated in his conduct gained him, through the school, so many friends, that the idea of his leaving them was matter of the greatest sorrow. With regret, his master and the ushers parted from a youth who did such honour to their labours, and the youth himself expressed no less regret on parting with his master, who had manifested so much zeal in forming him to probity and literature. In particular, the master, who was pleased and flattered by his progress, being as it was his work, appeared afflicted at the separation, and he shewed it in the letter which he wrote

wrote on this occasion to his pupil's mother, and in which he gave her the relation of her son's exemplary behaviour.

Lucian, during his whole journey, felt the strongest of all possible emotions. In idea, he was got safe home, before the coach could bring him. He was now no longer fearful to appear before his mother, having for the last ten months, applied so diligently to his studies. Notwithstanding which, he would at times, break out into ejaculations like the following : Fool as I have been ! might I not easily have done the same these two years past and upwards. I should now have been much more improved in learning. What a deal there is of which I do not know a tittle. Ah, I should have saved myself by diligence, since first I left my mother's house, a deal of trouble and vexation.

Being now near home, he found his mother had come on a mile or two, to meet him on the road. What pleasure to behold him ! From his master's letter she had been apprized beforehand of his happy reformation ; and he brought her, in his pocket, much more flattering information of his conduct since. A mother only seeks to find out reasons for increasing her affection. These she found in the idea that his love for her, had brought him to this reformation ; and she could not but infer the consequences of this reformation, in those happy days that were reserved her to enjoy.

And

And Lucian did not in the least belie her expectations. After having spent about a week in visiting his friends and neighbours, he sat down to work with real ardour. From the habit he had now contracted of activity, he was soon qualified in every province of his father's business. We must own it had declined a little since his death. The bustle of it was above the widow's strength of constitution to endure it. Lucian's understanding and exactitude restored it. He grew wealthy, married, and took care to educate his numerous children as a careful father should do, but particularly, he did every thing he could do to evince the inestimable worth of time; and by his own example, save them from the mortifying thought of having misemployed it.

T H E
D A N G E R S
O F A
F O R E I G N E D U C A T I O N .

AT a time when many families in England send their children over to the Continent for education, and without reluctance place the female part in convents, it may not be wholly foreign to the nature of this publication, to insert the following tale extracted from the Theatre of Education; which, if those who give into this practice are not void of feeling, will apprise them of the risk they run. No farther preface can be necessary. We shall therefore pass directly to the tale, which is as follows:—

A young lady, called Cecilia, had been sent to France, and put into a convent there for education; which, when she had finished, it was meant to have her home; but for a reason which the dialogue will show, and which we therefore shall not speak of here, she formed a resolution of remaining there for life, and consequently taking, as they say, the veil. The
entrea-

entreaties of her friends were useless. She declared her resolution was immoveable, and entered on her year's probation, of which year the final day was come: upon the eve of which, the Lady Abbess had the following conversation with the Mother Abbess who presided in the convent for her.

Tell me, said the Abbess, my good mother, what I wish to know. They say those two young persons that must take the veil to-morrow are at present ill. That would retard the ceremony, which you know it is our interest not to have delayed.

The MOTHER. I must acknowledge you are in the right, my Lady Abbess. On the eve of such a day as——

The ABBESS. The important business of to-morrow is of such a nature, that it cannot be delayed. So many to our knowledge have shrunk back!

The MOTHER. A year's noviceship! 'Tis much too long: there rises, as we know, a multitude of notions in a giddy female's head before a year is passed.

The ABBESS. Yes, yes, a multitude indeed. If the noviciate season could be shortened, in that case our convents would be fuller than they are.

The MOTHER. Why then does Government neglect a point of so much consequence?

The ABBESS. Let me alone; I have a plan in view.

The MOTHER. If you succeed therein, it will be certainly a deal of money in your pocket.

The ABBESS. How?

The MOTHER. How, Madam? Why in chocolate, tea, coffee, and confectionary, that our novices consume while they are such. Do they cost nothing? Were the season of probation limited to half a year, the expence of these, if my arithmetic does not deceive me, would in that case be reduced a half.

The ABBESS. Right, mother; but at present let us speak of our two novices.

The MOTHER. Cecilia seems as if she had been weeping all night long; and yet she does not in the least degree complain. Calista, her companion, is not quite so dull, but says she has a fever on her.

The ABBESS. Mere evasions! We know all their shifts: but I will have a little conversation with them. They have friends, who figure in the world. Cecilia, in particular, and that reflects no little honour on a convent.

The MOTHER. Shall I tell you, Madam, notwithstanding, I suspect the truth of her vocation? Recollect, when her relations placed her here, how much aversion she expressed to living in a convent.

The ABBESS. Yes, in reality I do remember. She took pleasure in declaring she would never be a nun.

The MOTHER. And all at once we find her
tone

tone quite altered, and in spite of every friend's entreaty, and her sister's tears, she seems resolved to take the veil. This is not natural: and then those sighs that frequently escape her, and the sadness she gives way to. Must not they mean something?

The ABBESS. Yes, yes; what you say is reasonable: there is something hid beneath this strange behaviour: but my dear, good mother, go and fetch her; I must try to get the secret from her.

The MOTHER. Yes.

She went accordingly, and when Cecilia came before the crafty abbess, she began as follows:—

Come, my sweet Cecilia, my dear sister: come; I have not seen you yet all day, and was this moment speaking of you to the mother.

CECILIA. You are very good.

The ABBESS. And have you breakfasted, my child?

CECILIA. No, Madam.

The ABBESS. No! and why?

CECILIA. Because I am not hungry.

The ABBESS. I am told, my dear, you were complaining of the cold this morning in your cell; on which I ordered you a stove, which you will have to-morrow.

CECILIA, Thank you, Madam.

The ABBESS. Ah, my child, to-morrow you will think a glorious day indeed!

CECILIA. Alas!

The ABBESS. I love that sigh! it is descriptive of that holy joy and transport that should be within your heart.

CECILIA. Ah, Madam!

The ABBESS. Yes; weep, weep, my child, without restraint; you ought indeed to do so. You can never be too much affected at the happiness you will so soon experience.

CECILIA. But——

The ABBESS. Well, what, my dear Cecilia? You continue weeping, and that's good. Weep, weep your fill: but here alone, and not where others might observe your tears; for they might scandalize the weak and wicked, who would probably mistake the motive: but with us, my child, your sisters, you need never fear ridiculous interpretations. We have all experienced just the same emotions in our hearts and holy transports as you do, and well know what they are.

CECILIA. Yes, Madam, I can easily persuade myself you read my heart, for I have no disguise.

The ABBESS. No, no: that would but ill consist with your vocation; the sincerity of which I dare pronounce for.

The sly abbess was pursuing thus her hypocritical discourse, and soothing the distressed Cecilia, when the Convent-portress brought her mistress in a letter for Cecilia. We have said before that it was meant upon the morrow she should take the veil, and that her friends were
all

all against that step. This letter then, as will appear, was sent her by the dearest of her friends. The Lady Abbess took it, and the bearer being gone, began again with this preliminary observation, while she broke the seal:—

You know the rule, my child: as long as you remain a novice——

CECILIA. Read it, Madam. I have no objection; but permit me first to see the writing.

The ABBESS. There, Cecilia.

CECILIA. 'Tis my dear, dear sister's. Read it, Madam, quickly.

The Abbess (*reading.*)

“Dearest Sister,

“This is very likely the last letter I shall ever send you; and the purport of it is to mention I am just arrived at Calais. I have finished every thing except the affair of my approaching marriage that detained me such a length of time in England. That I cannot settle, till such time as I have seen you once again. I should have been at Abbeville three days ago, but for the occurrences that have till now detained me on the road. I mean myself that happiness next Thursday.”

CECILIA. Thursday, Madam? That's to-day.

The ABBESS. It is so—(*She continues reading.*)

“It will be the day before that fatal one that is to tear you from the world for ever.

Oh dear sister, notwithstanding the sincerity of your vocation, as you call it, I am struck with horror at the idea—*(To Cecilia.)* What a strange expression! Struck with horror!

CECILIA. Pray go on, dear Madam.

The ABBESS *(Reading.)* "At the idea What society for my poor sister! only nuns, with gloomy faces! *(She discontinues reading.)*

CECILIA. Shall I read it, Madam? Possibly you cannot make the writing out.

The ABBESS. Methinks your sister's principles want purifying.

CECILIA. Her ideas, with regard to convents, are a little out of character, I must acknowledge. But my letter, Madam?

The ABBESS. Look you, I have read the whole; and really I should not let you know what follows. The whole letter should be thrown into the fire: and therefore hear me, my dear sister; you will make your vows tomorrow, and this day should all be spent in meditation; consequently it were well you would not see your sister when she comes. We will provide her with a room apart. I will excuse you to her, and on Saturday she shall be introduced.

CECILIA. But, Madam——

The ABBESS. No reply, my child: you know my will, and have been taught how much obedience——

CECILIA. I have but a word to say: pray
be

be so condescending, Madam, as to hear it. For these two years past I have been steadily resolved to take the veil. My sister and acquaintances in England have in vain opposed the resolution; and you cannot think one meeting will obtain her what for two whole years I have refused: but she is dear to me beyond expression, and the only friend I have; I must then absolutely see her, and the instant she arrives. Yes, Madam, grant me this indulgence, or to-morrow I will make enquiry for another convent, where they treat their novices with greater kindness. When to-morrow comes, I shall resign myself entirely to your will; if I am now allowed to see my sister; but to-day, at least, I will be my own mistress.

The ABBESS. Hey, my dear Cecilia. Do not discompose yourself at this rate: there is no occasion for it. I can see you love your sister, and would grieve were she refused admittance to you. I give up the point, and you shall have your wish.

With this the conversation ended, breakfast being ready; not a common breakfast, but a sort of treat the Abbess gave that morning. All the sisters and Calista came with them to fetch the Abbess and Cecilia: but this last employed the opportunity of having twenty minutes conversation with Calista, while the rest were making merry at the breakfast table; and accordingly the following conversation passed between them, which will show the reason

son why Cecilia, notwithstanding she detested a conventual life, determined to embrace it.

When the Abbess then was gone to breakfast, followed by her nuns, Calista seeing the reluctance of Cecilia to go after, asked if they should follow.

CECILIA. You may do as you thing proper; but for my part, dear Calista, I shall stay behind.

CALISTA. In that case, you will lose a deal of wit and humour. Not that I, Cecilia, wish to be a hearer. On the other hand, I cannot think there is another convent in the kingdom so irregular as this.

CECILIA. Unhappily there are too many like it: idleness and ignorance lead naturally to such scenes as we are witness to in this seclusion from the world.

CALISTA. And yet, it is to such improper seminaries, English parents send their children to be educated.

CECILIA. Yes; but trust me, for my inexperience of the world is not so great but I have gained some knowledge, that a mother who sincerely loves her daughter, and by any means can bring her up in England, will not send her for a little smattering of French to France; for that is all she can obtain, and much less to a convent. But, my dear Cecilia, I must absolutely seize the present opportunity, now we are left alone, to tell you what I have upon my heart, for 'tis too great a burden.

CALISTA.

CALISTA. What have you to tell me then, my dear Cecilia?

CECILIA. You well know the love with which your kindness has inspired me: you are here the only person I respect and cherish.

CALISTA. Well?—

CECILIA. Judge then, if I have secret sorrows, whether I should hide them from you?

CALISTA. To confess the truth, Cecilia, I suspected it was so; for every thing has uniformly tended to betray you. I have never been a spy upon you, but the eyes of friendship are clear sighted: that I need not tell you. Ah, Cecilia, you were crying, were you not, this very morning?

CECILIA. Yes, 'tis true; I don't restrain myself. In giving up the world, I sunder a connection very precious to my heart.—I have a sister; yes, Calista, and so good a sister!

CALISTA. Yes, I know.

CECILIA. And love her more than the whole world. Almost an orphan in my cradle, she was in reality the first and only object whose affection I could have recourse to. She is somewhat older than myself: her reason, much maturer than my own, illuminated my first childhood, and contributed to form my mind, and make me what I am at present. I received from her example, consolation, love, and counsel. I have always been accustomed to consider her the safest guide, the kindest sister, and the best of friends. I am persuaded there could
be

be no sacrifice she would not make at once for my advantage; and on my side, I would give my life for her advantage.

CALISTA. I have heard she is at present on the point of being married.

CECILIA. Yes, Calista.

CALISTA. Does she marry the same person that she first of all made choice of?

CECILIA. Yes. Some interested reasons put off the connection for a season; but 'tis now to be confirmed.

CALISTA. 'Tis a connection then of love?

CECILIA. Yes, now; but formerly it was a matter of convenience only, and no more; but in the course of their acquaintance, Julia saw he had so many virtues that she could not but esteem and love him for them. As it chanced, the young man's father died, and left him an abundant fortune, ten times greater than my sister's; upon which, affairs took quite a different turn. The ambitious mother then formed other projects, and withdrew her word. The youth was almost in despair, but had the virtue to obey, and yet declared, that having lost my sister, he would never marry: this, at last, affected as it should have done his mother, who however suffered many years to pass before she gave him her consent, and now he is to have the recompence of his fidelity and love.

CALISTA. But still, my dear Cecilia, tell me how could you resist the prayers of Julia, and resolve to give her up for ever? Certainly
your

your fortune is a decent one: that uncle who so truly loved you, at his setting out for India, made it equal to your sister's, and I need not say you might have lived quite happy in the world. Ah, doubtless, some concealed and fatal cause has wrought upon you to renounce it.

CECILIA. Though I should not have been born for such a life as I am now embracing, and though inclination should not in the least have made me chuse it, be persuaded, dear Calista, that when any one brings with her into solitude a tranquil mind, she may endure what some would call the burthen of it, without yielding to despair at first; and in the sequel, without thinking it disgustful. I regret not either this vain world, or any of its pleasures; they may dazzle one a little, but can never satisfy. I grieve not at the thought of parting as I do with any thing except my sister: but if she be happy, I am happy also.

CALISTA. To forget ourself, and be solicitous for the promotion of another's happiness. Thus is it we should love. I find you will not place a full reliance on me; notwithstanding, I acknowledge every thing I see in your behaviour strengthens and confirms the friendship that connects me to you.

CECILIA. But I hear a tread, Calista. Tell no creature living what I have communicated to you.

In reality, the tread she heard, as just now mentioned, was the mother's, who had left the breakfast

breakfast scene, to intimate the arrival of her sister, then in conversation with the abbess. The old hypocrite no sooner had come in, than she began her forced congratulation, in this manner:

Joy, with all my heart: yes, joy, my dear Cecilia; I am come to let you know of the arrival of your sister.

CECILIA. Of my sister!

The MOTHER. She will instantly be with you; but the Lady Abbess means I should be present at your meeting.

CECILIA. Oh, with all my heart. I have no secrets to converse of.

The MOTHER. Secrets! No, no: as for that, Cecilia, we are well acquainted with you. Secrets! You have none, I know, you would conceal from us, but naturally hate them. Look ye, I was saying so this morning to the abbess. You are like myself in that particular. Your heart between your lips. — Yes, yes; your heart between your lips: and therefore I shall stay while you are both together, for no other reason, than because 'tis usual. So, my dear Cecilia, no complaining speeches, I beseech you; but as hitherto, all cheerfulness and courage. These are what we look for from you.

CECILIA. As for courage, Madam, you have had sufficient proof of that in my behaviour here; but as for cheerfulness, that I pre-
fume

sume to hope will not at present be expected from me.

THE MOTHER. Yes, indeed, Cecilia, but it will. We look for imitation when we set you the example; therefore you are not to hope in-dulgence on that article. I tell you so before hand.

Here the mother gave a nod. Calista understood it and withdrew; when, not a minute afterward, Miss Julia entered to Cecilia, crying out: Where is she?

CECILIA. Ah, dear sister!

JULIA (*embracing her.*) Ah, my dear Cecilia, my dear sister, is it you? How dismal a condition you appear reduced to!

THE MOTHER. As for that, she is in perfect health, I can assure you, Madam. Oh, believe me, our dear sister is a perfect saint, and her behaviour edifies the convent; therefore in return do we all love her: one would think her our spoiled child.

JULIA (*gazing at Cecilia.*) How pale and gloomy!

CECILIA. The surprise the joy——

JULIA. How altered you appear, Cecilia!

Oh, replied the hypocrite, in answer to this last remark, if she is altered, it is all since yesterday. Why she is commonly as rosy as a new wax Jesus,—in allusion to the crucifixes many Roman Catholics have constantly about them.

Sister, I repeat it, said Cecilia, the surprise
2 C the

the joy of seeing you again, so much affects me, that it is not wonderful my countenance should undergo some alteration.

JULIA. Do you love me then to such excess, Cecilia?—Should I be persuaded to believe it, though you tell me so yourself; when on the other hand, to-morrow—But, dear sister, for the last time, may we not converse together without witnesses?

The MOTHER. Our rules will not permit it, Madam.

JULIA. What! you mean to stay here with us?

The MOTHER. I am forced to do so.

JULIA. Ah, in that case, I am sorry upon your account; for be assured I shall not check myself, but utter things that may displease you.

The MOTHER. You are joking, Madam. I must think you more polite than——

JULIA. There is room indeed to be polite, when you are taking from me the enjoyment of my life, my happiness in this world, and for ever likewise.—Hear me, my good sister, hear me: 'tis not yet too late to do so, for you know, that till to-morrow you are free. If you persist in your resolve, you will reduce me to despair: pray do not interrupt me. I can guess what you would mean to say; that your vocation is sincere, and your desire thereto a violent and solid passion. Such are your pretexts; do I not know them, all by heart? I
look

look on genuine piety as something so sublime, that even virtue when without it is uncertain, and the happiness of life imperfect; but without a clog upon yourself, and without taking, as they say, the veil or making any vow, may you not lead whatever sort of life you please?

THE MOTHER. That, Madam, is quite different. The whole merit here is in the sacrifice, the vow——

JULIA. Such merit is the merit only of a moment, and at eighteen years of age, enthusiasm only, or seduction. Let us keep our freedom, and then willingly, and not compelled by oaths, let us proceed to practise every virtue, and embrace the austerities peculiar to a cloister. We shall have the glory, in that case, of thinking we do nothing from compulsion, and the happiness of dedicating to God's service both our heart and inclination, which alone can be accepted by him. But I know, dear sister, these are reasons that affect you very little, and have others for you to consider. You have certainly a feeling heart. Can you be then insensible, Cecilia, to the great delight of doing good, and dedicating a considerable fortune to the glorious purpose of relieving the unhappy.

CECILIA. A considerable fortune, sister! Mine, you know, is the reverse.

JULIA. But if your lot should now be altered. Should you find yourself while I am speaking a rich heiress. If God's providence should have devolved a great estate upon you.

If enabled of a sudden to be useful to mankind and aid the unhappy——

CECILIA. What may be the meaning of all this; explain yourself, dear sister.

The MOTHER. One might then be benefactress to a convent.

JULIA. To enrich those only that have made a vow of poverty, is not, I fancy, the best use to which one can devote a fortune; rather may one call it the reverse; but to establish institutions beneficial to humanity, watch over them ourselves, and do whatever we are able, so that they may prosper;—these are projects that well suit with a beneficent and pious soul: and 'tis not in a convent we shall ever be enabled to promote them. In one word, Cecilia, our poor uncle in the East is dead, and has bequeathed us both an ample fortune, in addition to the trifling one, for which we were before indebted to his bounty.—This new destiny imposes on us both new duties. If we cannot serve the world, we are permitted then to live according to our inclinations, but the possibility of succouring the unhappy, and proposing our behaviour as a great example, ought to force us out of solitude. Ah, sister, if God's providence enables us to make provision for the happiness of others, can we labour to establish our own happiness alone, without the least attention to those others? You are silent, dear Cecilia; but I see your tears. Speak, speak; what hope may I indulge?

CECILIA,

CECILIA. Can it be possible,—dear sister —Oh, Great God!

The MOTHER. Cecilia, I am certain, will not yield to the temptation.

These were her last words; for fearing the reverse of what she had asserted of Cecilia's virtue, she ran out to tell the abbess what great danger she was in, of losing thus a novice: while Miss Julia asked her sister, whether she still hesitated? What then must I do, continued she, to undeceive you with regard to being cloistered. Have both friendship and sound reason lost their rights for ever with you? Hear at least then the suggestions of your own compassion. I shall die if you accomplish this unhappy sacrifice; I cannot taste of any pleasure in the world, unless you share it with me. Have compassion therefore on my weakness, if it merits such a name. It is your sister and your friend that on her knee solicits you. With this she knelt: her sister raised her, saying, Oh, my sister!—my dear sister! Could you only read my bosom! Ah, for Heaven's sake let me breathe a little; when Calista, anxious as it seems for the decision of the day, laid hold of the occasion given her by the mother's absence, to come in and ask Cecilia in what manner things went on: but seeing her in such an agitation, as to speak with difficulty, told her sister she would answer for her: for in spite of all her prudence, said Calista, I have read her

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heart,

heart, and the condition she is in at present adds to my suspicions.

CECILIA. Ah, dear sister! Ah, Calista!

JULIA. Well, my good young lady?

CALISTA (*to Julia.*) To augment your fortune, to restore you to your lover, and to take away that obstacle with which an avaricious mother constantly opposed your wish, Cecilia sacrificed herself: her inclination for the cloister is pretended.

What Cecilia! cried out Julia: Gracious God:—and fell into an elbow chair,

And was it then for me, said Julia, coming to herself, you would have sacrificed your youth? What cruel, though dear proof, alas, of boundless friendship! But, dear sister, how could I mistake the matter, or you think of ruining your fortune to establish mine. The excess, Cecilia, of your friendship made you both unjust and barbarous. You endeavoured to divide your lot in this world from your friend's; and did not think I should partake in all the horrors of your lot, when you resolved——

CECILIA. 'Tis possible I may have erred, dear sister; but had you been in Cecilia's situation, you would certainly have done the same.

CALISTA. What an event! and how much joy it gives me! but expect congratulations on the occasion from me only. They are all alarmed within at what the mother has informed

formed them ; and were holding something like a council on it, when I entered. You will—

She was going on to mention they must very soon expect to have the abbess interrupt them, when the abbess in reality did interrupt them, followed by the mother.—'Tis high time, said she to Julia, in a fury, I should interfere, and check the scandal you would throw upon my house, by thus endeavouring, though without success, to vitiate and seduce a novice under my protection. I beseech you to retire ; and you, Cecilia, my dear child, I have been told of your courageous resolution. It augments the great opinion I have entertained this long while of you ; and——

Ah, Madam, interrupted here Cecilia ; if on such terms only as you hint at, I have merited your good opinion, you are very much deceived, and must pronounce me soon unworthy of it. I shall quit you for my sister. Providence has joined us ; and for my part, never will I think of quitting her again.

What ? how ? Cecilia, said the abbess, in a greater fury now than ever, can you possibly give proof of such unworthy weakness ?

No, no, Madam, said the hypocrite : 'tis only a temptation she will instantly repent of ; I am certain of it.

But without attending to her, Julia told Cecilia every thing was ready at the door for their departure ; upon which Cecilia turning to her friend Calista, would have offered her from
friendship

friendship an asylum, if she chose to quit the convent: but the abbess asked her, by what right she durst——Calista, understanding what she meant to say, addressed her to the following purport, that she needed not be any ways alarmed, as her reply would show. Your generosity, said then Calista, turning to Cecilia, fills my heart with pleasure; but for my part, I am far from envying your condition. I am perfectly contented with my lot, and no consideration can prevail upon me to desire an alteration. Virtue here shall constitute my happiness, and yours too, on a theatre more brilliant. Virtue only can make either of us happy. Providence decrees you shall be happy in the world, and calls me for that purpose to the cloister.

And so saying, they all parted: the affectionate Cecilia, with her sister, being bound for England, where they now live happy, and both married; nothing but affection, and no wish of giving up the world's permitted pleasures, having first induced Cecilia to endure the solitude and horrors of a convent.

VICE AND VIRTUE.

MR. Harrington, detained a long time from his native country in the Indies, where he filled a capital appointment, in the end returned to England and his family, with whom it was his resolution to enjoy, in peace, the fortune he had got together. He had but one child, a son twelve years of age or thereabouts, in whom his tenderest hopes and expectations were concentrated. It was only for his future benefit that he had consecrated his past life and labour to the duties of a painful occupation far removed from England and his friends. His prospects were, in this respect, even realized beyond his hopes, and he returned immensely wealthy; but alas! he had the grief to find how much that time which he had spent abroad in thus amassing wealth, would have been better dedicated to the service of his son at home.

For Mr. Harrington, whose intellects one would have thought, to judge by his proceeding, were not sounder than his constitution, had surrendered the beloved Antony to an unprincipled and mercenary tutor, who to keep his place, had only studied upon all occasions to content the whims and fancies of his pupil, and impose on the mistaken fondness of a mother, who did every thing but idolize him,

Quite

Quite intoxicated with the praises of as many as came near him, Antony had by degrees waxed strong in every vicious habit; that from childhood he had been permitted to indulge in unrestrained. His tutor, whose stupidity was only equalled by his meanness, frequently insinuated that his patrimony being so immense, it would be folly in him, should he think it needful to consume his health in study; and that fortune, having been so partial as to give him more than others, had designed he should not be condemned to undergo their labours. These perfidious intimations, so congenial to the natural propensities of Antony, by this time had corrupted both his heart and understanding. He was noted for his sloth, his falsity, his want of natural affection, and his vanity, which was so great that he beheld with no less scorn than if they had been brutes, all those who would not rise to be as wealthy as himself. Of all the little histories and tales his tutor frequently would tell him, he would recollect those only that recorded instances of pride and impudence. He knew not what was courage, or an elevated soul, or feelings of humanity, and never had he wept at the recital of a generous action.

Mr. Harrington soon saw this odious turn of mind in Antony. How fatal the discovery for a tender father, who, returning from so great a distance to enjoy the company and converse of that son, he thought would be the boast of his

His old age, was, on the other hand, inclined to fear he would be his disgrace and scandal! His first business was to send away the unworthy tutor, and in spite of those infirmities that at his time of life were now beginning to attack him, he resolved to take upon himself the future government of Antony, and pluck up those bad habits, if he could, that had unfortunately taken root within him.

He supposed, however, he should much more speedily accomplish this intention, could he find out for his son some suitable companion of unblemished principles, and nearly of his age, whose conduct might excite in Antony some kind of emulation. The selection of such suitable companion, Mr. Harrington conceived should not be left to chance. For many weeks, he had been making every search he could, but unsuccessfully; when taking his accustomed walk, one evening, in the country whither he was gone from London for a little relaxation, he perceived, as he was passing through a village, several children got together for diversion, one of which had such a pleasing figure and appearance, as at first to interest the heart of Mr. Harrington, and greatly likewise, in his favour.

He drew nigh, conversed a little with him, and received such answers to his several questions as bespoke the little fellow's understanding, and increased the fair idea a first view had raised within him. By these answers, he
was

was made to understand the object of his contemplation was the eldest of six children, all belonging to the village doctor, and whose means were scarce sufficient to provide for such a family, however œconomically they were regulated. These particulars thus known, and Mr. Harrington inferring from them, as he might do, many hopes of being now successful, he requested that the little boy, whose name was Francis, would go with him to his father's house.

This last, it seems upon inquiry, was a sensible and worthy man, whose skill might have procured him practice in the capital, but being moderate in his wishes, and content with little, he preferred to all the riches that in London could be grasped at, the retirement of the country, the enjoyment that results from doing good to simple people round about him, which in London would not have been found, and the discharge of what he thought his duty to a numerous family. His partner, who as yet was rather young, had all his inclinations; and discretion joined to happiness seemed flourishing within their habitation.

Mr. Harrington, who having introduced himself, had spoke awhile about their children, wishing to discover by what principles their education had been carried on, and which, upon inquiry, squared intirely with his own ideas, took the Doctor by the hand, and told him the occasion of his visit; adding, that in
case

case he could resolve to part with Francis for a season, he would educate him, just as if he were his own, and from that moment take his fortune on him. The acknowledged probity of Mr. Harrington, his wealth and credit would have instantly induced less tender, or more avaricious parents to accept an offer of such generosity: but they, how bring themselves to think of parting with a son, who was the solace of their hearts? And Francis, likewise, how could he support the thought of being separated from those parents he so loved? Of course, impediments were started to the wish of Mr. Harrington; but Mr. Harrington was not to be put off, and persevered in his solicitation with such ardour, that at length he saw them yielding. The facility of seeing frequently their son, together with the hope that his advancement in the world might prove the happy groundwork upon which their other children might, in some degree, build up their fortune, in the end determined them: and Mr. Harrington went home quite happy; and the third day after (for the parents had desired three days to fit their son out with such things as his appearance in a place like London would require), came down again upon a second visit.

I shall not endeavour to describe the parents' feelings, at the thought of being separated from a son so tenderly beloved and cherished. Francis, who had been sufficiently the hero to

refrain from tears, while in the presence of his mother, fearing he should add to her affliction, was no sooner got into the carriage, than he gave a loose to his affliction, and wept bitterly, as much, one would have thought, as if his heart had really been breaking. Mr. Harrington, at first endeavoured by no other means than mute carresses, to console him, after which he clasped him in his arms, and bid him be of comfort : You shall find, said he, in me a second father, who will love you no less fondly than your first. Be good and diligent in that new situation you are going to be placed in, and I promise, nothing shall be wanting in my power to make you happy.

Francis was a little comforted at such affection. He embraced his benefactor in return, and said : Well, be my second father, sir ; and I, for my part, will endeavour to deserve your friendship.

Mr. Harrington established Francis in the family, as any father would have done a child returning to him after a long journey. He gave orders that his servants should consider him as if he were a son. The gentle and insinuating ways of Francis soon conciliated the affection and esteem of every one about him. Antony alone beheld him with a species of ill will. He could not but conjecture that the presence of this rival made a change of conduct necessary in himself, and that instead of being negligent as hitherto he had been, he must

must now, if he had any sense of shame, be studious. Having no just cause to hate him, he considered Francis could not but be worthy of his scorn, since he was born and educated in a little country town. The fear in which he stood, however, of his father, forced him to dissemble his ideas, and even hide them under the appearance of esteem and friendship. Francis, who could not suspect in others an hypocrisy he had not in himself, respected Antony with all his heart. It was his constant wish to aid him upon all occasions, and facilitate his studies. He put up with his caprices, whims and fancies, just as people put up with the faults of those they love.

His understanding, that already had been exercised by the attention of his father, met with nothing in the way of study to deter him from proceeding. Blessed by nature with a quick imagination, and prodigious memory, but what was more than all, desirous to make some return, at least, in gratitude, for that encouragement he was receiving every day from Mr. Harrington, he made so rapid an improvement, that his masters hardly could believe it. He was not less anxious to excel in what related to the body. He grew graceful in his manners, while his understanding ripened and his soul acquired new faculties. His father by adoption loved him every day with greater and still greater kindness. It was just the same with strangers. No one saw him twice, that

was not greatly interested in his favour. He was really polite without the least degree of affectation. He was zealous to oblige, without the least degree of meanness. He was cheerful in society, without the least degree of folly : so much so, that in reality his company communicated joy and pleasure through the dwelling. Notwithstanding so much cause for self congratulation, Francis, far from giving way to pride, became more modest. Though he could not possibly but know how greatly he was Antony's superior in respect of intellects and virtue, yet he would have wished to doubt he was ; and much more then, not seem so, that his friend might not be humbled in the thoughts of others. He was constantly the first to honour and defend him. Ah, would he in secret whisper to himself, if my protector had not shewn me so much kindness, or provided me the means of gaining knowledge as he has done, notwithstanding all the tenderness and forethought of my father, I should now be wholly unacquainted with the little I have learnt through Mr. Harrington's affection. Other children in my place, perhaps, would have improved much more the kindness of God's Providence ; and Antony himself might have surpassed me, had he been in my condition, or I been in his. He certainly may do without instruction better by a deal than I. It is the need in which I stood of education, that has made me what I am.

Eight years thus passed away, while Francis busily employed himself in gaining knowledge. Time and place would fail me, should I undertake to shew you with how many arts he had adorned his understanding. But for Antony, it would be to the full as difficult if I should undertake to shew you how much knowledge he might easily have had, but which he was without. His self-sufficiency had wrought upon him to believe that, in the terms peculiar to those sciences he had been taught, and which he still remembered, he knew more a great deal than the greatest masters. With respect to what we may denominate his native disposition, that was hardly mended for the better. It was natural to fancy that the terror of his father in degree repressed the torrent of his vices; but, by way of compensation, it had given him another. It had made him hypocritical to mask them.

Mr. Harrington, whose penetrating observation easily could see through every veil, must have already yielded to the weight of his afflictions, had not Francis's discreet demeanour been a matter of the greatest consolation to him. Yet, when Antony had reached his twentieth year, his bosom was not proof to thought, when he reflected on the dangers into which his son would plunge upon his entrance into public life. In this distracting interval, a violent disorder seized him, and a few days afterwards he died, even notwithstanding the affectionate
2 D 3 attention

attention Francis shewed him, till the fatal moment that divided them eternally from one another.

Antony no sooner had performed the last sad duties to his father, than set free from every species of restraint, he gave a loose to his unbridled passions. Utterly ungrateful to the memory of a kind and virtuous father, in the person of that second son he had adopted, he made haste to turn him out of doors, that left intirely to himself he might indulge in the excesses of a wild and savage life, and so make up for that constraint he had till now experienced.

With what different emotions was not Francis in the interval affected? Being now come home, it was not on account of such an alteration in his own condition, he shed tears; for Mr. Harrington had made provision for him. Could he possibly have thrown away a moment on himself, when he had lost his benefactor. It was he alone that gave occasion to his tears. That generous man who had attended to his infancy, whom he had always looked on as his father, and whose bosom proved him such. A malady, occasioned by that sorrow he gave way to for his loss, reduced him almost to death's door. In his delirium, he pronounced no other name than that of Harrington. He gave it even to his father when he saw him sitting by his bed; but knew not who he was. His life was for a long time doubtful, and at last he was indebted

indebted for his restoration to the cares and iterated supplications of a family, that seemed to breathe for his sake only.

After having staid some time among them, so that they might have the company of one they loved with such affection, and enjoy the pleasure of beholding him recovered, and considering his accomplishments and virtues, Francis, as he meant, returned to London, and sat down again to study with more appetite and benefit than ever. All, whose friendship he had been so happy as to gain beneath the roof of Mr. Harrington, united their endeavours to procure him some appointment. As it chanced the Duke of **** having finished at the University his studies, was about that period to be sent abroad that he might make the tour of Europe. Francis was presented to the friends of that young nobleman, as one well qualified to be his tutor and companion. Though he seemed quite young himself, his manner, conversation, person, and demeanour charmed them so exceedingly, they thought they could not elsewhere meet with any one so fitted to their purpose.

He accordingly set out, and with his pupil went on board the packet-boat at Dover, got to Calais, and proceeded as the order of their rout prescribed. The knowledge he had gained by reading, found ten thousand opportunities of being shewn to great advantage in the various places on the continent they visited. The
graces

graces of his mind and manners, made his company and conversation eagerly sought after at the several courts they went to. Many foreign princes did their utmost to retain him with them, by repeated promises of favour and distinction. But the first engagements he had entered into with the parents of his pupil, made him constantly reject them. It was no long time before the recompence of such fidelity attended him; for hardly had he brought his pupil back to England, and restored him to his parents and relations, when the sovereign having pitched on one among them to go out as his Ambassador to ———, this last procured our hero the distinguished post of Secretary to the Embassy. The ambassador, soon after his arrival at the court to which the king had sent him, happened to fall ill; and Francis, while his long indisposition lasted, represented him in every function, shewing such a happy knowledge of affairs and business, that the minister at home procured him an additional appointment. He was charged in short, soon after, with a very delicate negociation; he succeeded in it to the sovereign's wishes, and thus did his country a considerable service.

In the interim, Antony, as we shall see, was in a very different situation. We last left him giving loose to his unbridled passions. The irregularity and indolence of such a life, soon brought him into what may not improperly be called a species of brutality. No family would
let

let him mingle with them, no not even one of them who had respected his late father. Utterly unable to find any solace in retirement, thought, or study; he turned gambler, and at once was ruined in his property and constitution. He was shortly dragged to prison by his creditors, whom he had shamefully imposed upon and cheated. And the noise this metamorphosis of one, who had been so immensely wealthy, might be well supposed to make, brought Francis to a knowledge of his situation. What, said he, forgetting every former insult, my good benefactor's son in gaol! He flew directly thither; but alas! what language can describe the dismal state in which he found him! Pale, disfigured, and emaciated as it were for want of food, a victim to remorse, and in the last convulsions of despair. He brought him once again into the world, supplied his wants with money, and provided him that medical assistance he most stood in need of. He would cheerfully have parted with no less than half his fortune, would it but have brought him back to health and happiness; but the avenging blow was written in the book of Heaven. Antony survived not long, and Francis was affected at his death no less than had he been his friend. He could not easily find comfort in the thought of having been unable to repay his benefactor's son, some portion of the debt he had received. This thought affected for a length of time his spirits, and diverted him from action; but at length

length a sense of duty in him, and that empire of himself he was convinced he ought to have, restored him to the functions of his state, and he continued to discharge them with a probity and zeal that very soon advanced him to the elevated situation he is in at present.

T H E

BLESSINGS OF PEACE.

A TRAVELLER and a SHEPHERD.

The SHEPHERD.

WHAT seek'st thou, way-worn man?

The TRAVELLER. I seek a shade;
And lo! what I have found in ruins laid,
Here just athwart my way; a pillar thrown
Flat on the ground, and with foul weeds o'er-
grown!

The SHEPHERD. It was a tomb.

The TRAVELLER. And in the lake hard by,
Does not my sight a broken urn descry?
Let me approach.

The SHEPHERD. Hold! I will bring it you.

The TRAVELLER. Thanks shepherd; but
oh heavens! what's this I view!
What horrid scene is on the surface trac'd!
Whole villages the mimic flame lays waste!
Arm'd horses I behold prance to and fro.
Whose riders deal destruction as they go!

Its

THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE. 47

Its breath I see the tender infant yield,
 And dead and dying pave the ensanguin'd field,
 Whose mangled limbs emit a purple flood,
 And a whole country's harvest swims in blood :
 Hence (*throwing the urn from him*) to thy bed
 of ooze again, vile vase :

He, as I take it, swain, whose soul disgrace
 Lives on the chissel'd stone, was all men's foe ;
 And not a shepherd, sure ?

The SHEPHERD. A shepherd, no.
 He was a wretch : o'er all this wide domain,
 Peace and prosperity long held their reign.
 When, for its punishment the monster came,
 And the whole country wrapp'd in one wide
 flame.

The inhabitant here fix'd, tho' poor, was free,
 But his oppressive bondage could not flee.
 Even as a wolf by raging famine torn,
 Is on the timid flocks at midnight borne,
 Just so against a people, free from guile,
 Rich in the produce of their native soil,
 Safe and unarm'd, as having nought to dread,
 Harmless themselves, his murdering troops he
 led.

With his own hands, which still that blood
 besmear'd
 Shed by our fires, this monument he rear'd,
 Thinking their children would applaud his
 name ;
 But the vain deed has only fix'd his shame.

48 THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE.

See now his boasted monument laid low,
His ashes, which, while Time's long course
should flow,
Vainly he thought the mouldering urn would
keep,

Mix'd in the mud of this foul quagmire sleep.
His rusting sword too by the urn, see laid,
And odious reptiles trailing o'er the blade.
The memory of his guilt survives alone;
All he was once great, brave, and rich, unknown.
Without one friend's uplifted hand in prayer,
That the kind Gods his suffering soul would
spare,

In the drear solitude of nether skies
Torn by the teeth of vengeful fiends, he lies:
Dead tho' he is, yet still so great his crimes!
His memory shall be curs'd by future times.
No, tho' the Gods should proffer me a reign
Greater than king was yet e'er known to gain;
If for such gifts such price I were to pay,
I would refuse with scorn all thought of sway.
Rich with two sheep, if those would heaven but
give,

I would applaud my fate, and happier live:
One of which two in sacrifice should go,
Thanking the gods that cast my lot so low.

The TRAVELLER. Let us go hence, my
friend. What here I view,
Fills me with grief and indignation too.

The SHEPHERD. Then follow me; and if,
as well I deem,
Virtue and virtuous deeds thy heart esteem,

A nobler monument shall quickly rise,
And thy soul charm no less than please thy eyes.

The TRAVELLER. Is it another king's ?

The SHEPHERD. No king's, my friend ;
But my own father's. To yon hill ascend.—

*(He spoke ; and o'er the plain his footsteps led,
Straight to the spot where rose a humble shed,
Decent, tho' plain, and bosom'd in the shade
Wide o'er its roof by branching fruit trees made.)*

The TRAVELLER. Thrice beautiful retreat !

But see, my friend,
How in the east night's spreading shades ascend.
Back to the town I must my way pursue ;
Show me the monument, and then adieu.

The SHEPHERD. Look round about, o'er
all this wide domain :

Seest thou yon vine trees right across the plain ?
Seest thou those flocks, that on the mountain
feed ?

Seest thou yon harvests that adorn the mead ?
Seest thou those trees dispos'd in many a row ?
These are the monument I meant to show.

Our wasted plains exhibited to view
A scene, where the wild thistle only grew.
A desert ;—when he came with pious hand,
And smiling plenty soon cloth'd all the land.
Good as he was, no empty fame he sought,
No honour by the sculptor's science wrought,
But made his grave beneath this shapeless stone ;
To every one but us a grave unknown.
We know it well my friend ; for every day
Hither a rural band direct their way ;

50 THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE.

And with fresh-gather'd flowers, thrown copious
round,

Here while they stand, perfume the sacred
ground.

The gifts that from his hand were wont to flow
Have render'd him heaven's image here below.
Our songs shall of his name pour out the praise,
And in our hearts his altar will we raise.

T H E

POWER OF TRUTH.

HEGIAGES, a renowned Arabian warrior, but whose disposition was ferocious to the last degree, had once upon a time condemned to death with torture, many of the prisoners he had made in battle. One of these obtained a moment's audience of the tyrant, and addressed him to the following purpose : Hegiages, you should shew me favour ; for Abdarahman one day was venting curses on you, and I reprehended him ; since which he has been hostile to me ; and I should not now be in this situation, had I kept that friend. The tyrant asked him upon this, if he had any witness of the fact. The prisoner named another who was doomed to suffer with him. Hegiages had the witness brought before him, and examined : after which, he granted to the first that life he had solicited,

solicited, and turning to the witness, asked if he too had not vindicated him against Abdarahman? This last had so much veneration or respect for truth, that he was bold enough to tell him, no, because he did not merit in the least such vindication. Hegiages, notwithstanding his ferocity, was touched, as we shall see, at such a candid answer. Well then, he began, supposing I should pardon and release you likewise, would you shew yourself my friend in future? Yes, replied the prisoner. 'Tis enough then, answered Hegiages; I rely entirely on that single word. You have too clearly shewn your detestation, he went on, of falsehood, and I cannot doubt your word. Preserve that life then which you value less a great deal than your honour, and be free in future. 'Tis a recompence your virtue claims.

AN ENDOWMENT

I N T H E

DONOR'S LIFETIME.

IN the northern part of France, there is a little spot of ground, where virtue renders law unnecessary, and procures the inhabitants a state of peace as pure as it is solid or entire. The owner of this territory had a wife, in every

sense of the expression worthy of residing in it. Madame S**, to an elevated understanding joined benevolence of heart. Contented in her situation, she was happy. Being left a widow with a very trifling income, she could not assist the poor with money, yet no day passed by but she performed some worthy action. There was not a doctor or apothecary in the place; but Madame S**'s knowledge of the virtues resident in plants supplied that want. She spent her time in study, or in visiting the sick, comforted them with those arguments, religion only can suggest, or gave them comfortable food. She proved, that with a very bounded fortune one may be beneficent, and taste the purest happiness by doing all the good one can.

She had a servant, who had now lived with her upward of twelve years, called Mary Ann. This girl was really conspicuous for disinterestedness, and that attachment to her mistress she gave proof of. We must own indeed she never had been in the capital, or any other city, where her morals might have been corrupted. Madame S** sincerely loved her, and the wish of doing every thing she could to make her happy was her greatest pleasure. Mary Ann, as being somewhat older than her mistress, pleased herself with hoping she should die before her; but God's providence determined otherwise: a malady that seemed at first scarce any thing, but which as those called in to tend the lady,

lady, did not treat it properly, portended serious consequences, happened to attack her, and became soon after mortal. She beheld the approach of death, not only unappalled but also with the sweet composure of a virtuous individual, fortified with all the consolations of religion; and while every one about her was surrendered to the grief of losing her, she only seemed immoveable. A salutary regimen exactly followed, lengthened out her life for some few months; her courage gave her strength; she did not keep her bed, she walk'd about, she read and had (as she was used to have) the village maids come to her for instruction; she conversed with Mary Ann. She had the visits of her minister, and never did her patient equanimity forsake her.

One fine morning in the month of May, she rose at day break, and went out to take a walk with Mary Ann, (who was at all times her companion) in the fields. She gained the summit of a neighbouring hill, from whence the eye commanded a delightful prospect. She sat down upon the grass, and Mary Ann beside her. What a charming landscape, she began! See, Mary Ann, that beauteous meadow we have frequently walked over. There, if you remember, not long since, we met the good old Genevieve, oppressed beneath a *dossier* on her back, and holding with one hand a heavy basket full of apples; you would take the *dossier* from her, and in spite of that resistance

tance she could make, I seized the basket ; and thus lightened of so great a weight, we led the poor old woman to her cottage. Do you recollect with how much joy and pleasure we went forward, and how grateful the good creature seemed, and what a breakfast she *would* make us ? Turn your eyes a little to the right, and you will see the walk of willows by the lake, in which, when we were young, we us'd so frequently to angle. It is there too, that accompanied by Martha, we have made so many osier baskets, and then fill'd them to the top with violets and cowslips. Recollect before us there, that cottage ; it belongs to Frances. In two days you know, you made her up the wedding clothes I gave her. Towards the left there, I discern the entrance of the wood, where every holiday, I used to keep my little school for reading in the afternoons of summer. Oh what happy minutes have I not passed there, surrounded as I was by all our youthful neighbours ! You have not forgot the tales there told us by Honoria, and the songs that Ursula was used to warble, with a voice so clear and melodious.—Every object round about me brings to my remembrance something interesting. Oh how sweet and pleasing, in my present situation are these recollections !

Mary Ann had turned her face away that she might hide the tears she could not keep from shedding, while her mistress was pronouncing these last words. When she had finished them, she

She stopped for breath a little, and then lifting up both hands to heaven, began a sort of prayer: Oh gracious God, she said, that knowest my whole heart, I bless thee as my father, friend, and benefactor, and return thee all my thanks that thou hast placed me in a situation free from bad examples, hatred, envy, and pernicious counsel. Nothing could present itself to warp my understanding; or corrupt my heart. I never knew what courts or cities are. I have been told indeed, there are such things as false philosophers, as flatterers, as proud men, and others in the world, and been afflicted at the thought of their mistaken notions. I have pitied them, but never mixed in their society. Unknowing headstrong passions and deceitful pleasures, I have passed my days here in this happy corner of retirement. My happiness has been the purer, inasmuch as it has never drawn down envy on me. Innocence and peace, the tender feelings of humanity, and friendship have embellished every moment of my life. I have possessed the real blessings of this world, and at a time when the remembrance of past scenes is not to be supported by the wicked, my imagination is delighted with the recollection of old times. O father of my being, how thou overflowest in goodness, when thy providence exhorts us to detest all vice! Thou pointest out our road to happiness in this life, and beyond the grave encouragest our souls to hope an everlasting recompence in glory!

Madame

Madame S**, who had got up when she began this prayer, had scarcely closed it, when she sunk into the arms of Mary Ann; the fervour she had spoke with had exhausted her. The servant looking in her face, and seeing she was turned quite pale, and had her eyes shut, gave a cry. The mistress coming to herself again, and having hold of Mary Ann, grasped ardently her hand and asked her with a smile, while speaking, what she was afraid of? Dearest Mary Ann, said Madame S**, you whose pity is so genuine, are you not resigned? Is not your sacrifice already offered up? We shall again, my child, meet one another, and then part no more. Let my serenity console you. I have not a doubt but you will always have a sure asylum in my house, when I have left it. Would to God I were but able to make some provision for you; that I cannot, grieves me; nor is this my whole affliction. I must tell you, my poor girl—(here Mary Ann looked stedfastly at Madame S**; and the attention she gave ear with, was some interruption to her tears.)

You know, continued Madame S**, there is a poor old woman who keeps a school here in the village. Many, that come to her for instruction, can afford to pay without the least degree of inconvenience, but not all; and there are many likewise who, for want of money, never send their little ones at all. If I had lived some few years longer, I should then
have

have saved the sum (that is a hundred crowns) which would have paid the mistress for instructing every one that could not pay. But since it is God's pleasure that I should not have so great a satisfaction, I should certainly submit, without repining, to his holy will and pleasure. Mary Ann no sooner had heard this, than in a transport she laid hold of Madame S**'s hand. My dearest mistress, she began, but could not add another word. Tears drowned her farther utterance, and the lady, leaning on her arm, walked slowly towards the dwelling.

Madame S** survived this conversation but a week or thereabouts; by which time, being greatly sunk and weakened, she was now obliged to keep her bed. The faithful Mary Ann would never quit it, and the court-yard of the house was filled with the inhabitants that came to make inquiry after their *good lady*, friend and benefactress, and that afterwards would hurry to the church that they might pour their prayers out, for the preservation of a life so precious to them. But they were not heard. Her final moment was now come, and she beheld it with that fortitude of which religion only is the parent. Mary Ann received her dying breath. The watchings and afflictions she had gone through had an influence on her health, and she was taken dangerously ill herself; but when recovered, took a resolution to depart from. — She accordingly made up her bundle,

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bundle, and repairing to the church yard first, where they had buried Madame S**, wept upon her grave, and afterwards set out for Charleville, her birth place, really regretted by the minister and people. Upwards of two years passed on, and not a syllable of news respecting Mary Ann. At last the minister received a box, containing money from her, and the following letter :—

Charleville, June 15, 1775.

MR. CURATE,

THERE they are at last, those hundred crowns, which, as you know, my dear and worthy mistress wished for on her death bed, God be praised for all things; her last will shall now be executed, and that righteous work she had projected be gone through with. Had I other money, I would then myself have brought you this; but I am destitute, and yet as happy as I can be, after such a loss as I have met with in the person of my mistress. I request your reverence to place this money out at interest, and inform the mistress of the school it will be for her use. It cannot but afford me real consolation, when I find she is enabled to receive poor children *gratis*, so that they may learn to read a little, were it even nothing but their prayers to the Almighty; and when every parent in the village sends her young ones to her. I sincerely hope the little innocents thus benefited

benefited with their families will pray to God in favour of my mistress, and I beg you will inform them 'tis their duty so to do. And I have now to ask the Lord one only favour, namely, that, before I die, I may have saved a little money, and have wherewithal to visit you. When I have seen this school of charity established by my mistress, I shall have no other blessing in the world to ask for.

I am, Mr. CURATE, with respect, &c.

MARY ANN RAMBOUR.

The minister was overwhelmed with admiration on receiving such a letter, and his soul was framed to be affected at so generous an action. In the church next day, he read this letter, which drew tears from all the congregation, nor could he himself refrain from weeping. He placed out the money, as the donor had requested; and this sum, the produce of two years incessant labour, and the token of a serving-maid's attachment to her mistress, is a fund at present that provides instruction for the children of a parish.

After Mary Anne had thus disposed of every thing she was possessed of, she sat down again to work, but not with so much ardour, since from henceforth what she gained was only to procure herself subsistence. But, as if God's providence were always anxious to reward good actions, even in the present state of being, one of her relations died about this
time,

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time, and, being touched with her attachment, left her in his will two hundred livres yearly, or about nine guineas. With this little fortune, Mary Ann, still working, was quite wealthy in a province free from taxes, and producing all the necessary things of life in great abundance. She would not however spend of these two hundred livres more than what was absolutely needful to support herself, intending to give something now and then, as she might find occasion, to the poor about her.

We must naturally think that, even with this recompence bequeathed her, Mary Ann was not as happy as she should have been, since all together it would barely give her food and clothes; and since to exercise that charity she was so set on, she was forced to work like any other person; but in thinking so, we are deceived, and greatly. Mary Ann was no less happy than she should have been, as being no less happy than she wished; for she that is not led by vanity to virtuous actions is completely satisfied, in doing good. The rich man may bestow with greater ostentation, but the poor man gives with greater pleasures; and an action in itself is more or less praise worthy, in proportion to the sacrifices it may cost us. He that has a fortune of two thousand pounds, and lays out, that poverty may be assisted, does a glorious action we must own, and one that is not often imitated. But of what does he deprive himself? of some few superfluities. In bringing
down

down his income to a thousand pounds, he does not give up his fine house, coach, servants, or the like, and yet becomes entitled to a very high degree of reputation. He is happy doubtless, and deserves to be so; but the poor man has a happiness by far superior: for imagine Mary Ann with her two hundred livers doing every thing for God; imagine her at work all day, that she may get a little money, and at night go with it to some family that have no bread to give their children. After such an action, follow her as she is going home. She enters her poor habitation, and with eyes still moistened by those tears she has been shedding, goes to supper. Very likely she has nothing but the vegetables growing in her little garden; but with heartfelt satisfaction, she will say: The meat, of which I have deprived myself to day, gives four or five poor children bread. This thought rejoices her. She recollects their mother's thanks and blessings, and still sees with what avidity the little starving innocents attack the bread she brought them, after two days' hunger. O how precious such reflections make the frugal meal of Mary Ann! and when 'tis over, with what pleasure does she not get up, and pour out her accustomed prayers to God, that sovereignly bounteous Being who has said: *Take heed ye give not alms that men may see you; for in that case, ye shall have no recompence from him that is in heaven.* Mary Ann indeed has not been half so happy as to feed a multitude

of starving fellow creatures, but is not without a real stock of merit in her heart, since she has given in secret, and deprived herself of what was necessary to her maintenance. She has not wished for men's applauses, but is guided by religion only, and humanity. She finds in her ideas, in her heart, in the remembrance of her charity, and recollection of that sacrifice she has been making, an exhaustless fund of happiness.—All this however, is but a digression.

Mary Ann soon came to know in her retirement that the minister had read her letter to his congregation; but instead of feeling any pleasure at the intelligence, was disappointed,—“I am sorry” were her words, when afterwards she wrote upon this subject to the curate, “I am sorry you have published a transaction I designed should be unknown to every one but God and you; instead of which, it will be very quickly in the mouth of every one, and I shall be deprived of more than half the pleasure I expected.”—She was in the right. It *was* soon after in the mouth of every one, and came to Charleville. The wealthiest people of the place no sooner were informed thereof, than they desired to see and know her. Several even tempted her by every means imaginable to accept that succour from them her own situation needed, but she constantly refused their bounty, always answering she was perfectly contented with her situation.

But to close this story, too much, very likely,
lengthened

lengthened out already,—as it chanced, the curate had occasion very soon to visit Paris. When got there, he spoke in every company of Mary Ann Rambour, and gave them the affecting story of her charity, which soon became a universal subject for discourse. The tutor of a Prince communicated it soon after to his pupil, who, though scarcely nine years old, affords the greatest hope and expectation, that in future he will prove no less distinguished for his virtues and beneficence, than now he is for that exalted rank and situation he is born to. When the tutor had concluded, Ah, said he, and instantly burst out into a flood of tears while speaking, how I wish I were a man!—And why, Sir, said the tutor. I would give poor Mary Ann a pension, said the child. Indeed! replied the tutor; well then, my dear prince, you know you have the tenderest father in the world.—Do you imagine I might ask him then? inquired the little boy?—No doubt you may so, was the other's answer; and to mention such a thing will highly please him. At these words, the prince, as if he had been quite beside himself, ran out of the apartment, went down stairs, and rushed into a lower chamber, where he learned his father was at billiards. There were several persons with him, but the little fellow fixed his observations upon him alone. He flung himself into the prince's arms, and with an eager voice cried out: Papa, I have a favour to request; and drew him into

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an adjoining room, where he explained his meaning in a manner so affecting, that his father, to reward such sensibility, embraced him ten times over, and made answer that his Mary Ann Rambour should have a pension of six hundred livres granted her for so much goodness, with a letter mentioning at whose request her charity was thus rewarded. At this information, 'tis impossible for words to show the little prince's satisfaction, he expressed it in the way that children of his age are used to do, and begged he might have leave himself to write this letter, which, when touched a little and corrected by his father, was as follows :

*St. L***, August 2, 1782.*

" I am very happy, Madam, while I write, in having learned the generous action your attachment to a worthy lady, Madame S**, has produced, because I have the liberty to say how much it moved me. My preceptor wished one day to show by an example the exceeding loveliness of virtue, as he said, and thereupon related me your history. Of course, I am indebted to you for a pleasing lesson, which at all times I shall recollect. Receive from me the grant which I inclose you of a pension to the value of six hundred livres, with an order for the first three months to be advanced you, as a testimony of my admiration, and the wish I shall at all times have to make you happy."

With

With this letter we conclude, as Mary Ann is now grown rich; with this additional enjoyment, that her riches are the salary with which God's providence has paid her virtue.

T H E

W I D O W E R.

In a Letter to his Friend.

SIR,

THE just value expressed in all your actions for the matrimonial state, emboldens me to write this letter, without any fear of being thought ridiculous, wherein I am so free as to confess, that though 'tis now three months and upwards since I lost a very valuable woman, my affliction is still fresh, and often, in the midst of company, in any situation that revives her memory, I think what she would say or do on such or such particular occasion, and am often forced to quit the room, that I may vent my tears before I can be easy. Let me recommend a subject to you that has been but little handled; and *that* subject is male widowhood, on which I beg you will be pleased to touch a little, the first opportunity you have. To those who

never lived like husbands with their spouses, this would be an unintelligible jargon; but to such as have enjoyed the state of matrimony as they should have done, you will have every line that hits the sorrow in their heart, attended with a tear of pity first, and consolation afterwards. For by what goodness of God's providence it is, I know not; but believe me, every gush of passion is a step towards its relief, and there is really a certain comfort in the very act of sorrowing, which I suppose arises from a secret consciousness within the mind, that the affliction it is under has a virtuous cause. My grief indeed is not so violent, as when I first bewailed my loss: I think it has subsided rather into what I call a sober state of mind, than any actual perturbation. I should fancy I might draw up rules for men's behaviour in my situation, so that all their sorrow should be turned, as mine is, into meekness and complacency. But when, Sir, in a serious lonely hour, I place my dear departed wife in thought before me, with that air of powerful persuasion in her countenance, which she at all times would put on, when I was in a passion; with that gentle affability she would assume, when I was chearful; and that sweet compassion she would melt with when uneasiness oppressed me, I confess I am quite inconsolable at the remembrance, and my eyes gush out with grief, as if she had but just expired. In this condition I am interrupted by a lovely girl, who is the very picture in my thought

thought of what her mother was upon our wedding day : she strives to comfort me ; but how, Sir, shall I let you know that all the consolation she affords me, is to give my tears an easier flow ? She knows she quickens all my sorrow, and relieves my burthened bosom at the self-same time. Oh, tell me, you that have the boast of learning, tell me, by what word I shall discriminate a motion of the soul, for which there is not in reality a name. Whenever she kneels down and earnestly entreats me to take comfort, she is then my child ; but when I clasp her in my arms, and bid her say no more, she is my very wife, the very comforter whose absence I lament. I banish her the room and weep aloud, through grief that I have lost her mother, and for joy that I have *her*.

I wish, Sir, it were possible to have a sense of these perplexities. You might communicate, in that case, to the guilty part of men, that they are utterly incapable of half the happiness resulting from the very sorrows of the virtuous.

But I beg a little longer your indulgence, while I let you know the manner of her death. She bade adieu to all her family, and bore the useless application of prescriptions with the greatest patience. When informed that she must die, she wished that every one then present in the room, except myself, would leave it. She began, when they were gone, and told me she had nothing in particular to say ; because
she

she was resigned, and never had kept secret any thing relating to us both : but she desired to be alone, that, in God's presence, she might go through her last duty, without interruption, and return me thanks for all the goodness I had shown her; hoping, that in my last moments I should feel the same degree of consolation for that goodness as she did, from having constantly demeaned herself to me with honour, truth, and virtue.

I restrain myself, and will not tell you that this kindness cut my heart in twain. To thank me for my goodness, if there could be any suited to her excellence—I say to thank me for my goodness, when I thought she might be going to accuse me for some starts of passion in the twenty years and upward we had lived together—How was not my heart affected! All I had at any time said to her; all the incidents of joy and sorrow that had taken place between us, crowded in upon my mind together; and when quickly afterwards I saw the pangs of death lay hold of that dear body I had clasped so often and with so much transport; when I saw those eyes that cherished every one they used to look upon, grow ghastly while the sufferer fixed them eagerly on me, what then were my sensations! She expired within my arms. I thought, in my distraction, I observed her breast still heave a little. There was certainly life still within her. I cried out, *Help, Help*; but instantly grew giddy; every thing turned round

round about me, owing to the violent distemper in my brain ; the best of women being breathless, and eternally torn from me.

Now the doctrine I would beg you to establish on the basis of my letter, is as follows :—that a certain equanimity pervades the very sorrow of the virtuous man, and disappoints its malice. Though he must pass through affliction with his fellow creatures, yet his conscious rectitude shall undermine it ; nay, Sir, his affliction shall confirm his rectitude, when he reflects upon the use of virtue in the hour of trial. I sat down to put you upon furnishing such rules as might enable us to conquer such affliction ; but should rather bid you teach us how we may be capable thereof.

There is a thing much argued on by men of letters ; namely, *Taste*, in their ideas of propriety in what is done or said : and something like this *taste* is deeply grafted in the soul of him who thinks and acts uprightly. Every thing called vicious or unworthy is contemptible to him, though all men should approve it. He enjoys that lively sensibility in all the enjoyments and afflictions of this life, which, with propriety, he may enjoy where any duty is concerned. To be indifferent when in decency we ought to be afflicted, I should think would prove us greater blockheads than an ignorance of what is beautiful in any passage taken out of Virgil. The fine gentlemen of modern times are always boasting their hard-heartedness ; and
what

what we call humanity has very little share in their pretences. He is thought a valiant fellow that is always ready to destroy the man he hates ; but he who mourns in spirit for the woman he has loved, is not entitled to the same esteem. A thousand pretty thoughts might be struck out, by properly reflecting on the persons most susceptible of that affliction mentioned in this letter ; and I dare engage, it will be found they are the best and bravest of mankind.

DIVES AND LAZARUS.

LAZARUS.

YOU are a rich man, Sir, and I am, on the other hand, quite poor. Your superfluity is very great, and I want common necessaries. You have no one in the world dependant on you for subsistence. I have three poor children, but no bread to give them ; neither can I work, by reason of an ailment in my arm, that has deprived me of its use. You are a man, and so am I. By all these titles, therefore, I request your charity.

DIVES. Ah, God will help you, my good friend ; but I have nothing for you.

LAZARUS,

DIVES AND LAZARUS.

71.

LAZARUS. God will help me! He has given the rich man money that the poor man might be aided with some portion of his superfluity. Respecting those less comfortably situated in the world than you are, you should think yourself a steward for the distribution of his blessings. You have nothing for me! I am sure you have much more than you can possibly make use of. In the name of God then, of whose bounty you partake so largely, imitate that bounty, and permit not my poor wife and children to expire for want of victuals.

DIVES. Was there ever such an insolent old vagabond! Be gone!

LAZARUS. Old vagabond!

DIVES. Yes, vagabond; or if you do not like that title, such a *rogue*! Begone, I tell you.

LAZARUS. No, Sir, I am not a rogue. I must acknowledge I am destitute, but honest notwithstanding. I continued working at my business while I could, and now turn beggar for no other reason than because I cannot feed my family. Were I a rogue, I would not supplicate your charity by day, but with a cutlass fall upon you when 'twas night, and get much more in that case from your fear than I desire at present your benevolence should give me. You are pleased to call me rogue. No doubt there may be some among the poor that merit such a title? but why so? A man wants bread——

DIVES.

DIVES. Fine talking ! just as if a man need really want bread !

LAZARUS. Another error this with you rich men. You think a multitude of wants are in themselves impossible ; because you do not personally undergo them. Certainly a man may be in need of bread. His children pine for want of sustenance, and he has not an ounce of food to give them. He is agitated with their sorrowful complainings. He is either out of work, or has not strength to labour. He has therefore only one resource, and that is to ask alms. He meets with nothing but refusals all day long ; and in the evening comes home empty. He is driven to despair. The thought of robbery no longer shocks him : he demands your money with a pistol. What now would you say of such a man ?

DIVES. Say ? hang him.

LAZARUS. No, Sir, 'tis not he, but 'tis the unrelenting rich man, who refuses him, that should be—What ? not hanged, but punished with severity, if laws could but be made against the vices of the heart. The least relief might have preserved this man from such an action ; and what feeling bosom could refuse it to a miserable creature, and particularly if he thought it might prevent a crime, preserve the king a subject, and save little innocents from perishing, who by their father's loss must be reduced to great distress ?

DIVES.

DIVES. But why should vagabonds get children, when they cannot feed them? Why should they even marry, having nothing?

LAZARUS. What, because I may be poor, must I refuse myself the sweetest of all consolations nature has to give? Must I defeat her kind intentions? Must I pass my life in celibacy, and deny the state those subjects that in time will certainly be useful? Must I fly from a connection that would soften my distressful situation? Who will labour for the rich? who wait upon them? who prepare the harvest that supports them? who pour out their blood to guard the country, if the poor should not have children? When a poor man marries, he may certainly rely a little on the friendship of the rich, at least till such time as his children can maintain themselves, and then perhaps he may not want it.

DIVES. Yes; but does not marriage make you miserable?

LAZARUS. It has made me poor indeed, and therefore am I come to crave your charity. I do not promise I will pray to God in your behalf, if you assist me; since that duty you should certainly fulfil yourself: but I may tell you, that a merciful and righteous God will recompense you for an action of humanity, and that perhaps abundance is bestowed upon you only as a trial of your virtue, by that Power who will condemn you, if at least you do not

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give

give some little portion of your superfluities to such as are in want.

DIVES. You preach, I fancy, and that tires me. So good by.

LAZARUS. One moment more then, Sir, and I have done. As what I have been saying could not move you, something I would add before I finish, that concerns your interest—Will you hear it?

DIVES. Aye, aye, that I will. What is it?

LAZARUS. A kind-hearted man who lives no great way from my hovel, and who is not rich, refuses me at no time some small succour, nor yet any other poor man when he asks it. If at any time he is incapable of giving such essential services in money, as may possibly be wanted, he lays hold of every opportunity, by consolation and instruction, to be useful. Well, Sir, sometimes I begin to give him thanks for his assistance, but he always stops me, saying: "He, my friend, who gives, however little be the gift, is always happier in his heart than the receiver. The delight that flows from doing good is universally its best reward. Its seat is in the heart, and 'tis an exquisite sensation. This delight, and this alone, has for a long time past made life supportable to me." Now, since this good man says thus much, he thinks so, and it must be so too. For a length of time, Sir, you have constantly been varying your enjoyments, but at no time tried, perhaps, this last. Oh, should you do so, you might probably

probably prefer to any pleasure that has cost you dear, the joy of saying to yourself as follows:—There exists a family my bounty has preserved at once from guilt and wretchedness. This thought——

DIVES. Farewel. I must have surely had a deal of patience to stand hearing thus your nonsense. So begone once more, or else——

LAZARUS. Oh Heaven! 'Tis then enough that men should have great riches if they would be inaccessible to other men's distresses.

T H E
N E C E S S I T Y
O F
B E I N G L O V E D.

THE Visier Azamet had, in his youth, contributed to Sultan Mahmoud's pleasures, who, from gratitude, advanced him to the first distinction in the empire. Azamet no sooner was in office, than he took upon him to reform abuses; but the imans and grandees undid him: they revolted, both the prince

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and

and people, equally against him. Azamet was unexpectedly disgraced and banished.

Stripped of all his property, and left without a friend that durst avow his friendship, Azamet withdrew to take up his abode among the rocks or deserts of the Korasan. 'Twas there he lived alone, or rather unattended by a single human being, in a little hut, he had himself constructed on the borders of a running stream.

He had been living now two years and upwards in this solitary habitation, when the virtuous Usbeck found out his retreat. The wise advice of Usbeck, which had put him first upon the scheme of making reformatations, all intended to bring virtue into credit, and disgrace the wicked, had contributed, and not a little, to the Visier's overthrow. The sage, who never had forgot his friend in his degraded state, set out upon his journey to the Korasan.

He was not now, above a furlong distant from the abode of Azamet, when, walking on, he met him. They knew one another, and embraced. The wise man wept. The banished man seemed happy: he was all serenity of aspect; and content was in his bosom. Blessed, said Usbeck, be the Eternal, who gives strength to the unhappy. He, that had a grand pavilion in the fertile plains of Ghilem, is contented with a cottage in the deserts of the Korasan. O Azamet, thy virtue has come with thee to reside among the rocks. Thy
virtue

virtue comforts thee, though thou hast lost the roses that for ever bloom in Herat, the rich diamonds hardening in the mines of Nishapour, the silks that rustle in the fabrics of Mezendran. But inform me, has it taught thee yet to live alone? *They* cannot do without companions that are destitute of friends. What solitude is not a tomb?

While Usbeck was thus speaking, he approached the cottage, whither Azamet had not returned since first he left it in the morning, when the sun was hardly up. They heard the neighing of a colt that came to meet them. When the colt was near its master, it seemed glad to see him by its motions, turned about and walked before him, prancing all the way, and neighing.

Usbeck saw two beauteous heifers running towards them from a neighbouring meadow. They passed on, and afterwards repassed before the Visier. They appeared as offering him their milk, and holding out their necks before them to his yoke. They followed him,

A little further, and two goats, attended by their kids, as soon as Azamet appeared in sight, descended from the rocks, beside them. They expressed the joy they felt at his returning, with their butts and capers.

Soon too, from a neighbouring orchard full of fruit trees, issued half a dozen sheep: they bleated as they ran; they bounded, and ap-

proached to lick their master's hand, who in return caressed them, with a smile of satisfaction.

Just at the same moment, likewise, came a flock of doves, of which some perched upon his head, and others on his shoulder. He had entered, now, the enclosure round about his dwelling, when a cock perceiving him, that moment fell a crowing, and, as if in answer, several hens set up a cackle and flew out that they might add to his retinue.

But the demonstrations of affection and regard, displayed by all these creatures, did not equal those of two fine dogs that waited for the Visier at the entrance of his cott. They neither would come out to meet him, but appeared as if they meant to guard the dwelling he had trusted to them. Notwithstanding which, as soon as he had got in doors, they pawed and bounded round him, put themselves into a thousand postures, crouched before him, and expressed their joy by their agility; they licked their master's feet, and when he stretched his hand to pat and stroke them, they would hardly stay to be caressed, but rushing through the door-way, darted forward, made long circuits round the cottage, and scoured to and fro, so great was the excess of their affection. They seemed frantic with their joy; they barked in concert, and at last quite out of breath, returned, and lay a little while quite void of motion, at
the

the feet of their beloved master. Usbeck smiled with pleasure, when the Visier thus addressed him: You behold me, my good friend, what I have always been, since I could exercise my reason: need I tell you what? the friend of beings sensible of friendship. In the court of Mahmoud it was all my wish to make his subjects happy: they opposed my wish. I make these creatures happy: they are grateful for it. In the rocks then of the Korasan, you see that I am amply furnished with companions. You see also, that my solitude is not a tomb. Dear Usbeck, I still live; I love, and am beloved again.

NO FAITH WITH THE WICKED.

THREE men conspired to rob a house that had a treasure in it: they effected their design; and with the plunder, got into a wood, where they proposed to lie concealed, till such time as the hotness of the hue-and-cry which such a robbery must raise, was over: but they wanted victuals, and agreed that one among them would steal out, and purchase such provisions as were needful, at a neighbouring town. The youngest was dispatched upon this business.

On

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On the way, he argued with himself as follows : I am rich, but should be much more so, if I had all the treasure we have stolen. My companions are to have their share. Can I not take it from them ? Nothing easier. I need only poison the provisions - I shall buy them. I can say, on my return, I have already made a hearty dinner : they will eat without suspicion, and expire. I now have but a third part of the plunder, and shall then have all.

But what went forward with the two campaigns, in his absence ? They were talking to one another. It was very foolish to associate this young man in our designs. We have been forced to share the treasure with him, What by this means he has got, would have augmented very much our parts, and we should be quite rich. But he will very soon come back, and we have daggers.

He returned soon after with the poisoned victuals. His companions murdered him, and then sat down to eat. They died, and thus the plunder appertained to neither of them.

MAR-

MARRIAGE MADE FOR MAN.

A

D R A M A,

I N

T H R E E A C T S.

THE CHARACTERS.

MR. STERLING, *a bachelor.*

CLARISSA, *his niece.*

MRS. LOVEWELL, *a widow.*

LOVEWELL, *her son.*

JEWKS, *Mr. Sterling's housekeeper.*

VELLUM, *his steward.*

MARRIAGE MADE FOR MAN.

A C T I.

SCENE. *A room in Sterling's house.*

JEWKS and VELLUM.

VELLUM.

WHAT can be the matter with you, Mrs. Jewks? you seem quite agitated!

JEWKS. Yes; and not without good reason, Mr. Vellum, I assure you. Would you think it? I must quit my place, though I have held it fifteen years, if matters are permitted to continue as they are at present.

VELLUM. Singular enough! and I, who have been here these ten years, come next Michaelmas, must beat my march, if matters should or should not be permitted to continue as at present.

JEWKS. How! You never told me yet a single syllable of this! And pray, what motive can induce you to a resolution taken up so speedily? For my part, I will tell you mine. Come; let us deal sincerely. You are sensible we have till now kept up a proper understanding with each other.

VELLUM.

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VELLUM. Hush.—Speak lower.—There is but one word to say on the occasion. He is ruined.

JEWKS. Ruined! What! Our master? How?

VELLUM. The word perhaps is too familiar now a days; but I can tell you to a farthing what he has. Would you believe it? out of nearly fifteen hundred pounds a year he had, when I first undertook the management of matters here, he has but five poor hundreds left, computing every thing. Take that from me.

JEWKS. No more than that? And does he know it, Mr. Vellum?

VELLUM. No, not yet, good Mrs. Jewks: but then, his creditors will make him know it, to his cost, when I am here no longer to receive their visits at the time they come a dunning.

JEWKS. And pray, are not you afraid he should suspect you, when he comes to know his circumstances? People say, whenever Mr. Vellum's name is introduced in conversation, you are very comfortably off.

VELLUM. Not quite so comfortably off as you are, Mrs. Jewks: but five more years are something. In five years, one may amass a good round sum by service.

JEWKS. No reflections, pray, sir. All my gettings are the fruit of diligence.

VELLUM. No doubt, no doubt; I never fancied otherwise.

JEWKS

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JEWKS. But were it otherwise, have you, sir, nothing to reproach yourself with?

VELLUM. Nothing; no, upon my honour: do you think a steward can preserve his master's property from ruin, when he chuses to be ruined? And when once he is so, can he talk of quitting him as you do, if affairs are suffered to continue? no indeed; and therefore I have come to a determination.

JEWKS. Well, but I for my part are more merciful, and if he will but do me justice in a difference, that subsists between his niece and me; his niece, I say, who since she came from school, imagining herself a woman, takes upon her, as you know, to regulate the house and pry into my management,—in that case, notwithstanding Mr. Sterling's great misfortune, I will stay as long as he thinks proper.

VELLUM. Yes, yes, Mrs. Jewks, you are extremely fond of sticking fast, wherever you lay hold; I know that well: but I have very weighty reasons for retreating, and immediately. Young Lovewell, whom our master has brought up with Mr. Rosewell, the attorney, meaning he should manage his affairs in my place, has in some sort entered into place already. He dispatched him three weeks since, you know, into the country. Well then, it was his commission to go over the estates our master has, or thinks he has, in those parts; he has finished his survey, and is expected home again this very day.

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JEWKS. Yes, yes; I understand you. Lovewell must have found affairs in such disorder, that discretion bids you look at present to yourself; but I, more conscientious, have a way to manage matters very well between the uncle and the niece. My little cousin in the city has struck out a plan, and you shall see——

VELLUM. Ah, Mrs. Jewks, stay here as long as you think proper. You have half a dozen reasons for so doing. I have nothing but my honesty and honour to speak for me; which I will not trust to. As you say indeed, I might be taxed with that disorder, Lovewell may discover in his principal's affairs, when I have only been obedient. So,—But here comes Mr. Sterling, I must therefore break the ice.

JEWKS. And I too strike the iron while 'tis hot.

Mr. Sterling (*coming in*) Well, Jewks—well, Vellum, what's the matter? I am very glad to find you both together, as I want to talk a little with you. Is it your design to vex and fret me, Mr. Vellum? my affairs are somewhat out of order; that I know. I have till now liv'd too expensively; but matters are not past recovery, as I hope. I am a batchelor; the heat of youth is almost over with me. I have therefore every reason to contract the scale of my expences. Would you leave me then in my embarrassment, when I have every need of your assistance?

VELLUM. (*Aside*) I can see he does not know

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know the worst of his affairs. (*Aloud*) I cannot be of further service to you, sir.

MR. STERLING. Yes, Vellum; but you can—And you too, Jewks, in whose behalf I have at all times been so prejudiced, as to expect with reason some return of gratitude at present, are you likewise seriously determined to distress me?

JEWKS. No, sir; but your niece, to whom you have assigned the management of matters, can do very well without me. I should only be her servant, which, considering the authority that I have exercised here for so many years, I should not much approve of.

MR. STERLING. Come, my niece, whatever notions you may form about her, is a special girl, and has no wish to injure you in my opinion. Add this also, if you please to the account of her perfections, her relationship. You know, as well as I do, she is my own brother's child.

JEWKS. Yes, yes; I know that well enough, and am resolved to do her justice. She is pretty, she is young, and the affectionate regard with which you view her, merits a return. A niece like her, and living with a bachelor of such a generous turn as you have, cannot but inspire those sentiments to which we generally yield in favour of a child. You cannot, therefore, sir, do better than to keep her with you. No, you cannot.

VELLUM. Then too, in the next place, with

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regard to Mr. Lovewell, you have brought him up from infancy, on which account 'tis not astonishing that you should trust the management of your affairs to his discretion. You have known his mother likewise for so many years, who all that time has lived beneath your roof. Can my esteem, fir, possibly make head against such strong connections? No, fir. I must do myself a little justice. I am useless to you.

MR. STERLING. Very well, I understand you both. You mean to have it understood you quit me on account of certain jealousies you entertain, respectively, against my niece and Lovewell. In reply to which, I say, that as I cannot possibly ascribe the strange malignity of those expressions you have us'd, to any thing except the zeal you have to serve me, I forgive it. Therefore, do not think of interrupting by a spirit of cabal, the tranquil life I have so long been us'd to. Vellum, I will speak to Lovewell.

VELLUM. To no purpose, fir. At his return, I am persuaded, he will say whatever harm he can imagine of me.

MR. STERLING. Well then, I will not believe him; that I promise: and you, Jewks, depend upon it, I will give my niece so sharp a lesson she shall never think of thwarting you in any thing.

JEWKS. No, no, fir; she will never for
the

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the time to come be able to endure me. I am sure, as you will see.

Mr. STERLING. Oh peace, peace and friendship; that's my motto.—Vellum, let me ask, will every thing be ready for our ball and concert.

VELLUM. Yes, sir, we want nothing in the world but money.

Mr. STERLING. Nothing in the world but money! Always harping on that string. Well then, here's money for you. I was yesterday so lucky as to get two hundred guineas in the alley; there are fifty. Don't, however, use yourself to make me furnish you with money, when you want it. They would say, 'tis I that am the steward. Come, my friends, let us be always so.

JEWKS. With all my heart, sir. (*Aside*) But the little niece must absolutely have no way from this day forward; or I know what measures I shall take. (*She goes out.*)

VELLUM. (*Aside*) And I, for my part, will make ready every thing to favour my retreat. (*He goes out.*)

Mr. STERLING. How wicked and unjust the world is! One believes that Lovewell, for no other reason than because I have affectionately brought him up,—and likewise that his mother—Oh 'tis utterly impossible to guess what their imaginations fancy;—and the other goes so far as to imagine I have certain views upon my niece. Such, such, is the censorious world!

and such the clouds with which they would obscure the prospects of a batchelor, whose happiness they envy ! Yes, whose happiness, I say, for is there any state of life so pleasing ? Every where desir'd, at liberty to do whatever he thinks proper. Every sort of pleasure comes to meet him, and the sphere of his vexations, being bounded to himself, it is so very limited, that he has hardly time to feel it. Yes, whatever people say upon that head, a batchelor's condition is the happiest in the Universe.—A wife—and children !—Oh thank heaven, I know not what they mean ; but still am free from every inconvenience and embarrassment of conjugal connections.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*coming in and having heard the three or four last words*) Come, sir, courage and go on. I should but badly take my time, I fancy, were I to come now, and talk of marriage to you.

Mr. STERLING. Ah, dear madam, you surprise me at a time I was endeavouring to digest the troubles of my fortune. I am never half so merry, as when vex'd.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I understand : you practise cheerfulness, and are mechanically merry to keep up your spirits.

Mr. STERLING. Right, dear madam.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. By your conversation, I can easily discern your celibacy comforts you for every accident of fortune.

Mr. STERLING. Yes ; I value it no less than

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than you, your widowhood ; and in reality, when every thing is well considered, I must think our different lots are not so melancholy as some people would persuade us.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I, alas, became so young a widow, as you recollect, that I could scarcely know the meaning of the expression *loss of liberty*. However, upon that account, I do not less enjoy my freedom, and particularly since that patrimony was bequeathed me.

Mr. STERLING. You are then quite satisfied with the bequest ?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. It would have satisfied me, had I not procured it by the death of a relation that I lov'd, and valued. That, believe me, is a loss I shall not easily forget.

Mr. STERLING. I hear, and am in love, believe me, with your notions. But no more of this. Your mourning days are over now, and time, I need not tell you, is a skilful master. Madame Mara, whose attendance, if you recollect, you promis'd me this evening,—shall we have her ?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Certainly ; and she will please you greatly. She sings charmingly, and to improve herself in singing, Clary could not have a better teacher.

Mr. STERLING. I am well acquainted with her talents, having heard her frequently at the Pantheon, at her private concerts too, and in the Abbey. But to change the subject, madam, I shall be unhappy, if your son, dear Lovewell,
does

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does not come in time this evening to be present at our ball.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You know, that notwithstanding he is very young, he is no less exact to his appointments. He informed you in his letter, he would certainly be here by six o'clock. 'Tis now no more than five at farthest; so that I am certain he is not far off.

Mr. STERLING. Yes, yes; he is exact indeed, and that in some degree removes my apprehensions. What a son you have in Lovewell, madam. Are you sensible how happy you should think yourself in having such a son? and more particularly, when our youth in general are so giddy?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. 'Tis to you he is indebted for whatever commendable qualities he may possess. The care you have at all times taken of his education uniformly carried with it every token of paternal love.

Mr. STERLING. The happy disposition of your son encouraged me to be thus careful of his education: and yet, madam, would you think it; there are people here, within my house, who fancy I have special reasons for considering him with something more than common friendship, so disposed are men in general to contemplate the worst side of every thing.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Those people do not know then, I became acquainted with you not till full three years and upwards after he was born; and that till then, I was restricted to a country

country town, not less than eighty miles from London.

Mr. STERLING. They forget just what they please, and recollected so likewise; but the youth I am at present speaking of, reminds me, that had things gone properly, I might have now been married, and been father to a son or daughter, older now than Lovewell.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. What a notion! just as if at such a time of life as yours, you were too old for living happy with a family of young ones of your own creation. You complain of time, but not of that aversion you have always had for matrimony. I must say, indeed, your tenderness and friendship for my son have proved you were designed by providence to be a loving father, and no doubt good husband. Own then, 'tis a pity that a heart like yours, susceptible of every generous sentiment, should have considered it a pleasing occupation to suppress the feelings of humanity, and lengthen out a life of care and solitude in odious celibacy.

Mr. STERLING. That may be indeed; but I have hitherto pursued my inclination; and my love of freedom, a propensity to study, and a relish for the pleasure of the world: all these have influenced me hitherto, and still continue so to do, in favour of that celibacy you call odious, notwithstanding those good qualities you can discover in me.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. 'Tis but justice I should pay

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pay you such a compliment. My son owes more to your solicitude than life ; and I too more perhaps than friendship. In that cruel state to which the death of my late husband, your particular and bosom friend, reduced us, we received such real service from you at a time when my whole fortune lay at stake, that I can never thank you for such service as I ought ; and when I think the time is coming fast upon us all, when we must part——

Mr. STERLING. Pray speak not of it: I for my part cannot possibly reflect thereon, without a sort of perturbation. (*To a servant entering.*) Well?

The SERVANT. A letter, Sir.

Mr. STERLING (*taking it.*) Good. Give it me. (*The servant goes out.*) To Mr. Sterling—(*reading the letter*)—It is indeed for me—(*putting it up into his pocket.*)

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Pray make no ceremony upon my account, but read it.

Mr. STERLING. Since you bid me, (*opening the letter*) I will take that liberty. Ah, ah, no signature or common writing, but all music. Though an amateur, I hardly know one note. 'Tis very likely sent me for my concert.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I know hardly more than you. Ah, Madame Mara, were you with us now ! but we may read the words at least—(*taking the paper.*)

Mr. STERLING. Well, let us hear them.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. 'Tis a song. (*She reads.*)

Warmed

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Warm'd by Lycoris' ardent eyes,
Anacreon's tuneful soul was fir'd;
When his lascivious notes he sung,
That beauty his whole soul inspir'd.
The pen he wrote with, from love's wing
Must have been plucked, as all agree,
So thy Clarissa too of thee
Makes the Anacreon I would sing.

I fancy there's some scheme in this. Shall I continue?

MR. STERLING. Certainly; I have a curiosity to know what follows:

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*reading*)

Unknowing rivalry or kin,
Thy charmer's youth thou shalt enjoy;
Nor Hymen's cumbrous burthen feel,
When fated with the wanton boy.
Pluck'd from Love's garden, this fair flow'r
Shall to thy soul fresh sweets convey,
And make thee, or misdeems my lay,
The Anacreon of the present hour.

MR. STERLING. What villainous reflections! Did you know me less, what strange ideas, madam, would you not have of me?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Can anonymous reflections hurt one, then? These verses are the composition of some worthless individual, since he hides himself. They are however levelled, I can see, at you.

Mr.

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Mr. STERLING. Yes, yes, no doubt: but to the rest.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*reading*)

If to disturb thy tender loves,
Nine-month'd Lucina should prepare,
Have ready (as a friend I speak)
Thy dower to portion off the fair.
Plutus can well Love's slips repay;
Scorn therefore every sense of shame,
And for the object of thy flame,
Become the Anacreon of the day.

Mr. STERLING. Poor Clarissa! Is it possible the world should be so cruel!—You yourself know, madam, this poor child is in reality an orphan, without friends or fortune. I first brought her here, that she might have some education, and she meets with this injurious treatment!

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You must not consider in a serious manner thus the work of a malicious libeller; it merits only your contempt.

Mr. STERLING. No, madam: though contemptible enough, I must acknowledge it deserves much more than mere contempt. Were these vile stanzas levelled only at myself, I should despise them. But my niece, my dear Clarissa, who has nothing but her virtue as a portion, why must she be treated so outrageously? However, I must look on this same paper as a salutary admonition sent me. Others would, no doubt, consider

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consider it as such, without avowing their ideas. So that instantly, this very night, Clarissa shall return to school again. Besides you, madam, were a sort of mother to her here. You are about to leave us; one more reason, I should take the hint, and send her from me.—Every thing is settled on that head.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Let me speak a little freely to you. This is one among the numerous inconveniences attendant on that state you are so fond of. In a manner it has thrust you out of nature, and even made you overleap the bounds prescribed you in the world. Your conduct is suspected by society, and their suspicions take in every one about you. This, in general, is the consequence of celibacy, which must hurt a feeling disposition, such as yours is.

Mr. STERLING. You distress me, madam, at a time I stand in need of consolation.

CLARISSA (*coming in.*) Ah, my dear, dear madam, let me give you a good piece of news. I am again in favour, you must know, with Mrs. Jewks.—

Mr. STERLING. How, niece?

CLARISSA. You know, dear uncle, you directed me to mind how things were managed in the house?

Mr. STERLING. I do, and what of that?

CLARISSA. I found that every thing was in disorder, and remarked as much, you know, which made her very angry with me.

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Mr. STERLING. Well, what next ?

CLARISSA. We are, however, now good friends again ; nor can she show me half enough affection ; so that you will have that peace you so much wish for.

Mr. STERLING. Truly, I am glad to hear that matters are so settled : but for such good news, must mention something that will grieve you. I am very sorry—

CLARISSA. On account of what, dear uncle ?

Mr. STERLING. That this very night you must return to school.

CLARISSA. To school, dear uncle, and this very night ? what, after you had promised I should never leave you ? Ah, dear uncle, how have I displeased you ?

Mr. STERLING. You have not displeased me. On the other hand, I love you still, as much as ever I have done, and 'tis that love which makes me come to such a resolution much against my will. The world, of which you know so little, makes it criminal that we should live with one another. What is natural affection in me, passes—Ah, my dear Clarissa, I would here go on, but cannot.

CLARISSA. Cannot ? Is it possible ? Dear madam, speak a little for me.

Mr. STERLING. Be persuaded, I feel for you in my heart, whatever any other person possibly could tell me.—But, my dear Clarissa, for your own advantage, I must now insist upon obedience

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obedience, as on my part, I do every thing reluctantly that may affect you. Be determined, therefore, to perform your duty. I, on this occasion, am inflexible. I leave you to reflect a little; and I hope, that in my present state of trouble, your good friend and almost mother, will go with you in the chariot. I will see to have it ready. (*He goes out.*)

MRS. LOVEWELL. Be not thus disheartened, my dear girl. I judge what quarter, or can give a tolerable guess thereat, this storm is come from; but have hopes, I shall find means to dissipate it, and will spare no pains to do so. Come up stairs then, in about five minutes. I have something I must do before I talk the matter over with you.

CLARISSA. Ah my dear good lady; after what my uncle has so positively told me——

MRS. LOVEWELL. Yes, I know, what you would say,—that my endeavours will be useless; but have patience, and leave me to manage the affair. (*She goes out.*)

CLARISSA (*alone.*) Return again to school, as far as fifty miles and upward, from my uncle's, and this very night too! Ah, dear Lovewell, when you learn, on your return, we must be separated, and perhaps for ever,—No, your countenance and image, I foresee, will be for ever with me, and my heart——

LOVEWELL (*entering in a travelling dress.*) My dear Clarissa, what a pleasure that I meet you first at my return, of whom I had so long
been

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been thinking. Yes, 'tis you indeed, my dear sweet maid.

CLARISSA. Ah, Lovewell, I have long been thinking of you likewise; and had just before you entered here, been mentioning your name, but with an accent, notwithstanding, of affliction; which, when I inform you of the reason, you will say is no way out of season.

LOVEWELL. You alarm me, dear Clarissa. What has happen'd to you?

CLARISSA. I am ordered back to school again, this very night. My uncle told me, not five minutes since, he was obliged to send me there. Your mother says she will do every thing she can to make him change his resolution; but for my part, I imagine it will be lost labour.

LOVEWELL. Send you back to school again! My dear Clarissa, if you love me still, for heaven's sake let not such a circumstance afflict you. Pardon me, dear maid, for saying that if this be all that grieves your tender bosom, my affection for you looks upon it rather a happiness.

CLARISSA. A happiness! what, Lovewell: we must part! You love me! We are not to see each other any more; and yet,—Ah, poor Clarissa!—Is it thus you love me?

LOVEWELL. Do not judge so harshly of my love, till I have told you every thing. My mother lately wrote me word that quickly after my return I was to go again into the country,

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try, on a business relative to the estate my uncle left us.

CLARISSA. Well?

LOVEWELL. Well then, Clarissa, we shall once more be divided from each other. You are handsome, and please every eye. While I am absent, you will hardly want for lovers, who will do whatever they are able to obtain a place within your heart. Your uncle, very possibly, will think of giving you in marriage to my rival, more particularly as he does not know a tittle of our loves. My mother, who is no less ignorant thereof, can never be expected to say any thing in my behalf. All these inquietudes will cease if you are sent into the country. Pardon me, my dear Clarissa, then, if for a season I would sacrifice your freedom to my fears. This sentiment is far from being honourable, I confess to you; but I can only listen to the counsels of my love.

CLARISSA. I pardon you, dear Lovewell, in consideration of that sentiment itself. But tell me, have not I great reason to fear every thing, and do not all the dangers, absence may occasion——

LOVEWELL. Absence, doubtless, is an evil; but hearts such as ours, so faithfully attached, may meet it with less pain. It is the test of tenderness. It is the cloud, love often forms that it may turn soon afterward into a brighter day. Have not two lovers, when once separated, the resource of thinking of each other. Yes,

my dear Clarissa, thought heals all their evils, or at least alleviates them greatly. Though in person absent, yet their souls are constantly together.

CLARISSA. I could never have believed, that school, from which I came with so much satisfaction, could be so delightful as you represent it. Yes, dear Lovewell, though I always thought it rather dull and gloomy, I shall henceforth fancy it the abode of happiness, if it may only be the means of keeping pure and perfect in my heart, those sentiments that will be always precious to me.

LOVEWELL. And for my part, dear Clarissa, I shall look upon the world, when separated from you, as no better than a desert, till such time as we shall meet again, and be together. Go, then, to my mother, while I pay a visit to your uncle, and inform him of my whole proceedings in the country. I have dismal tidings for him.

CLARISSA. It was feared you would have such : What are they ?

LOVEWELL. You will know the whole too soon, Clarissa ; let not such a hint, however, grieve you out of measure. Every thing may yet be mended.

A C T II.

SCENE *continues.*JEWKS (*alone.*)

HERE are mighty changes brought about, and that too in a moment, as it were. A master whose affairs are in disorder; a vile steward sent about his business; pretty little miss dispatched to school; a widow, with her son, just ready to set off upon a jaunt into the country, and I only left behind with Mr. Sterling. All the better. He will be obliged to leave off his parade, and limit those expences he was at continually, which will save me, for the time to come, a deal of trouble. I know very well, my nameless couplets would go near to rid me of the little niece. Her foolish uncle does not in the least suspect his faithful Jewks of having played him such a trick; for I thought proper even to solicit she might not be sent to school; and thus, I am completely mistress in the house again.

LOVEWELL (*entering, and aside.*) This woman should be served no better than old Velum was. (*Aloud*) Well, Mrs. Jewks, what changes we have here!

JEWKS. Yes, sir, and I was thinking of them.

LOVEWELL. You were thinking of them? And who, pray, has caused them? may one ask

ask without offending you? Believe me, I fear not.

JEWKS. Why so; I am at all times free and open, and the attachment I have ever had, sir, for my worthy master's interest——

LOVEWELL. In the first place, made you underhandedly persuade him to send off his niece into the country.

JEWKS. What injustice! I persuade him! On the other hand, inquire, and you will find I did whatever I was able, on the plea of having being his faithful servant fifteen years and upwards, to prevent her being sent: but Mr. Sterling, as he said, was master, and would have things so.

LOVEWELL. Yes; he should certainly be master; and provided he would hear the advice of those who love him,——Mrs. Jewks, you think yourself quite cunning; but the time may come for pulling off your masque, as well as Vellum's. You are free, you say: you merit; therefore, I should be as free with you: and so I will be likewise, that you may depend upon. Clarissa was an eye-sore to you, as she found out your mismanagement of matters; therefore, you went secretly to work against her. For the sake of —— what do I know? For the sake, at least, of certain dirty purposes, you have not scrupled to disturb a good man's peace; but truth will show itself at last, to your confusion.

JEWKS.

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JEWKS. Sir, those menaces have no effect on me. I fear you not, and my deportment always has been such, that it defies reproach.

LOVEWELL. Mrs. Jewks, once more I tell you, 'tis your arts have sent Clarissa off. I am as certain of it as I am of my existence, though I know not how you went to work. You may consider it a lucky circumstance, that I set off to-morrow; otherwise——

JEWKS. Well, otherwise? What then? Perhaps it would not be amiss to send you off to school, yourself; for every word you utter shows how great a simpleton you are. But that you may not pester me a minute longer, I shall leave you to yourself. And so, your humble servant, sir. (*Goes out.*)

LOVEWELL. Poor gentleman! are you not yet sufficiently imposed upon?

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*entering.*) Well, what was Mr. Sterling doing when you left him?

LOVEWELL. Striking out another plan to regulate his conduct. After I had fully told him of the great disorder his affairs were in, the borrowings they were charged with, and the knavery of his steward, that has taken care to leave us of his own accord, he told me he had formed the resolution of reducing his expences; and that, too, with all the gaiety imaginable. He observed, that all misfortunes had their use, since having now a great deal less, he should have much less care to keep it. When a man has neither wife nor children,
added

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added he, how can he make himself unhappy ? In one word, his single life, he looks on as a false for every evil.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I am glad he bears the blow so well ; and hope his spirits may continue.

LOVEWELL. But, dear mother, with the opulence you have at present, — You are sensible how many obligations we have to him. — In his situation ; therefore, should not you —

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I know what you would say, as well as what I have to do ; and hope you will approve it. — I am likewise glad, you have such gratitude within you. — Every thing was ordered for our setting off to-morrow ; but my preparation shall be countermanded for a week or so, that I may see how things will turn ; but Mr. Sterling must not know of my intention till to-morrow. I have weighty reasons for this resolution.

LOVEWELL (*sighing.*) And Clarissa ; you have sent her off with Fanny, then, into the country ?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. So her uncle thinks ; but she is hid at present in my chamber, where she is to stay, till circumstances make it proper to produce her. I have weighty reasons for this step, too.

LOVEWELL (*with a sprightly tone of voice.*) Ah, my dear, dear mother, you concern yourself in favour of Clarissa. I can see you love her, and am quite enchanted at it.

Mrs.

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Mrs. LOVEWELL. She deserves I should ; but how your tone is altered since I told you where she is !

LOVEWELL. Alas ! did you but know, — I never yet durst tell you, — but, —

Mrs. LOVEWELL. But ! well, but what ? Speak, Lovewell ? you are talking to your friend. I think, you know that well enough.

LOVEWELL. Yes, yes, you are my friend indeed. I know it, and begin to think I have been guilty of a crime in keeping you till now a stranger to the disposition of my heart. Yes, dearest mother, I adore Clarissa, and have reason to suppose her not insensible of my affection, Condescend to look on our reciprocal attachment with a mother's eye. You know her, and must grant she is the model of all virtue, and the wonder of all beauty ; but the evil that pursues her, — without fortune, — friends, — or expectations. — She is more than charming, in the general acceptance of the term ; for her misfortunes make her still more charming than she would have been without them.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I am very glad you did not think of keeping this affair between you, secret any longer. I began to fear I should be forced to guess it, had you still continued to keep silence. Let it, therefore, be a secret still, but more particularly to Clarissa's uncle, till such time as I have thought a little, and determined on the proper steps to be pursued on this

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this occasion. Let my love do every thing in your behalf, Rely upon it, as you may do very safely, and go give those counter orders I was speaking of just now: but not in such a way, that Mr. Sterling may know any thing about it.

LOVEWELL. Ah, how happy am I on a sudden! (*Goes out.*)

Mrs. LOVEWELL. And I likewise. His affection for Clarissa is the thing I wanted, since by doing every thing to make him happy, I shall show my gratitude to Mr. Sterling likewise, interested as he must be in his niece's happiness. Alas! I owe him more than ever I can possibly repay; but he is come to seek me. (*To Mr. Sterling, coming in.*) Well, sir, Jewks has triumphed, and your niece is on her journey now into the country. I could no how go myself, and therefore sent my chambermaid.

Mr. STERLING. Your care obliges me: but let me notwithstanding mention my surprise, that you should still continue prejudiced against that woman. Did you only know how she endeavoured by persuasion to detain Clarissa here, you would in that case do her greater justice.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You may talk as long as you think proper; but shall never bring me to believe, your Jewks is not an artful creature, that imposes on you; and the more so, as you think her honest.

Mr. STERLING. She has been so many years attached——

Mrs.

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Mrs. LOVEWELL. Say rather, Sir, so many years upon the watch to violate the confidence with which you trust her.

Mr. STERLING. Pardon me, if my ideas of her do not square with yours. But to proceed to business,—I have just sent out to countermand my concert, which is one expence already saved me. I shall see, if 'tis not possible to live without a concert at one's house.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I fancy you will find it so.

Mr. STERLING. I should have liked to do so with the ball; but 'twas too late; so that, I fancy, must go on.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Yes truly must it: that, you know, I always thought a very great amusement; and besides, I mean to introduce a certain lady to you, one who is a friend of mine, and frequently has spoken of you in the highest terms. I sent her yesterday a ticket, and informed her I would manage matters so that she might have a conversation with you, which she wishes greatly.

Mr. STERLING. Wish to have a conversation, madam, do you say with me? And to what purpose, pray?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Oh, I know nothing on that head for certain; though I must acknowledge, I conjecture shrewdly: for the lady is a widow, very richly left, and if I have not misinterpreted appearances, has some designs upon you: so that, were you not possessed entirely

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with that demon of a single life, this matter might be brought to some conclusion happy for you both.

Mr. STERLING. Designs on me! She takes a proper time indeed to serve her purpose, when my fortunes are so shattered, and my youthful days quite over. I divine, she must be one of those same superannuated beauties that are dried up to a chip, which, as the proverb says, to look at, one can never tell what block 'twas cut from. Madam, to say nothing but the truth, much rather than be glued to such a one, I would remain a bachelor.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Aye, this is what I was afraid of, both on her account and yours.

Mr. STERLING. Afraid of? There was nothing to be feared in such a case for either of us. You inform me, she is rich; she cannot therefore want a husband long, if she desires to have one. With respect to me, my income is diminished. Well then, the less money the less care. I am not one of those who think they are entitled to get rid of their existence, in ill fortune. Is there not a sure resource in labour to get bread. Besides, there is so little wanted to subsist us, if we have but a good heart, together with a little courage in it, to put up with some few wants. Adversity but serves to render virtue more conspicuous, and vice only makes mankind despair. The situation I am in will show me truly what I am. Yes, yes; at
fifty

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fifty years of age, I shall find out, and for the first time in my life, what I am worth.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Find out!—Find out! —You will find out no more, with all your reasoning, than that men, when they have reached a certain time of life, must suffer many melancholy moments in a state of celibacy. We must own indeed, if we respect our character for candour, that as long as the precarious charms of youth and the vivacity of passions serve by way of aliment to this desire of freedom, which is very often only brother to licentiousness,—I say we must acknowledge every thing delights, and carries an enchanting aspect: but these moments so delightful pass away, and do not make up the whole life of any man. A time inevitably follows them, when the unmarried must discern they have been doing every thing they could do, for the purpose of defrauding nature: but instead, have put the trick upon themselves—I hear a foot upon the stairs: 'tis Madam Mara. What are we to do? Clarissa is not here—

Mr. STERLING. Why we must make the best excuse we can, and beg her to oblige us with a little of that admirable singing every one is so much struck with.—She is at the door. Do you speak to her.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*To Madame Mara coming in*). Your obedient, humble servant, madam. Be so kind as to sit down. We had designed to

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put a scholar under your instruction, but have been obliged to send her off into the country, not an hour ago; and had no time to give you intimation of it, or prevent you so much trouble, which we notwithstanding mean to satisfy you for. We think she will not long be absent, and design, when she comes back to take the benefit of your acknowledged skill, if you are pleased to let us have it. In the mean time, Madam, pardon me the freedom of requesting you to entertain us with a specimen of that uncommon harmony, which every one proclaims with so much approbation. Any thing you please; for nothing can be light or trifling from so great an artist.

MADAME MARA. I can give you, Madam, a delightful song, that was, no earlier than this morning, set to music. 'Tis quite new, and will afford you some idea of my skill. I have excited some small share of envy in the town. They criticise me without mercy; but I heed them not.

MR. STERLING. You act quite properly. The public love you. On your part, take care you do not grow upon their approbation, and abuse those favourable notions the whole town give into, of your voice. *(To Mrs. Lovewell.)* Come, Madam, listen; this will make us full amends for having lost our concert.

MADAME MARA *(sings.)*

MRS. LOVEWELL *(after she has finished.)*
Trust

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Trust me, now, your voice is delicate beyond expression.

Mr. STERLING. Nothing can be sweeter.

Madame MARA. I am glad it pleases you. And if I did not think I should fatigue your patience, I would sing you half a dozen stanzas that might probably divert you. They were put into my hand last night. The gentleman who brought them had them from another, and that other from another, and so upward through a dozen hands, so much the stanzas pleased them: infomuch, that I was prayed to put them into music, which as yet I have not done: but if you wish to hear me sing them, I can do it to another tune.

Mr. STERLING. You will oblige us greatly.

Madame MARA. They were wrote upon a batchelor who has a young relation, that is likewise very pretty, living with him. Oh, the words are quite delightful.

Mr. STERLING (*To Mr. Lovewell.*) Stanzas, and a young relation!—Is it possible that—

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*To Mr. Sterling*) We shall hear them; so pray sing us, if you please, these stanzas.

Madame MARA. Yes, with all my heart; but then, as they are ludicrous, and as the gentleman who brought them was himself enjoined to secrecy, don't talk about them any where as what I sung; for then, the author of them might be probably found out.

³ Mr. STERLING. Fear nothing, madam.

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Madame MARA singing.

Warm'd by Lycoris' ardent eyes—

Mr. STERLING (*To Mrs. Lovewell.*) The same,

Madame MARA (*continues singing.*)

Anacreon's tuneful soul was fir'd :

When his lascivious notes he sung,

That beauty his whole soul inspir'd—

The pen he wrote with, from Love's wing

Must have been pluck'd, as all agree ;

So thy Clarissa too of thee

Makes the Anacreon I would sing.

Mr. STERLING. Very well.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*To Madame Mara.*) Let me entreat you not to sing the other stanzas. We are well acquainted with the person they were made on. We have likewise read them. Certainly the ridicule was not deserved ; but yet, the gentleman would give I don't know what to find out who the author was.

Madame MARA. Oh, that I cannot say precisely ; nor indeed would I inform you of the little I was told,—unless you promise——

Mrs. LOVEWELL. We will promise any thing you please. But after all, 'tis nothing but a joke, and cannot bring you into danger.

Madame MARA I myself think so too ; but must have your promise to be secret.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. That you may be sure of.

Madame MARA. Well then, 'twas the batchelor's own upper servant that procured them

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them to be written ; and to heighten still the joke, conveyed them to her master by the post ; at least, the gentleman, my friend, informed me so. You know these sort of women at a bachelor's would always play the mistress : the relation was a spy upon her conduct, and she wished to rid herself of such a troublesome companion. Was it not a clever scheme :—Ah ! ah ! I should be glad to know if it succeeded.

MR. STERLING. Yes, it did succeed ; that I can tell you : but the schemer shall be punished, as she merits.—Here she is, quite apropos. (*Jewks appearing*) Come here, come here, good Mrs. Jewks. We have a little matter to adjust. Read that pray (*giving her the stanzas.*) Have you any knowledge of those verses.

JEWKS (*aside.*) Heaven's ! my verses, thus come round ! however, let me not betray myself. (*Aloud*) These verses ?—No, Sir.

MR. STERLING (*To Madame Mara.*) Excuse me, Madam. She says no, you hear : and yet these very verses (here they are) were sent to me, and this is Jewks, my upper servant.

MADAME MARA. I have only told you what I heard myself, Sir.

JEWKS. She has only told you. I am here accused, and must not stand on delicacy to acquit myself. If she has told you any thing to my discredit, she imposes on you.

MADAME MARA. I impose ! Oh ! oh ! If
such

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such then be your tone, I bind myself to prove I had these verses from a gentleman who told me, they were written for the upper servant of a single gentleman, and had been sent him. Now it seems your master is a single gentleman; such verses have been sent to him, and you are upper servant in his family. You are the guilty person therefore. I impose! the gentleman from whom I had the verses shall confirm what I have mentioned, to your face.

JEWKS. What then you dare——

Mr. STERLING. Too plain; too plain. Is this then a return for all the friendship I have shewn you?

JEWKS. Can you think, sir?——

Mr. STERLING. Think! Go, monster. Quit my presence; and in four-and-twenty hours, let there be nothing left belonging to you here.

JEWKS (*withdrawing and aside.*) What an unlucky chance! Who could have ever thought it!

Mr. STERLING. And you, madam, if you please to honour us this evening with your presence, pass into the ball room. We have been inviting a select assembly. You may meet with some amusement. We have got a domino and masque here at your service. Mrs. Lovewell, will you show the lady in? The company are come already, I believe.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. With all my heart. Come, madam, (*they go out.*)

Mr.

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Mr. STERLING (*perceiving Jewks.*) What are you there still?—You understood me?

JEWKS. Yes, and I obey, I merit your displeasure, sir; I own, I do: but then I know the cause of all this, sir. 'Tis Mr. Lovewell, who has doubtless done whatever he was able to undo me in your good opinion. Well then, though I quit your service, I will give you good advice: and therefore be upon your guard, nor send to have your niece again in town, while he is here, unless you wish to keep up a connection they have privately established, which perhaps will bring but little honour to themselves or you. I leave you to reflect thereon. (*She goes out, and Mrs. Lovewell enters.*)

Mr. STERLING. You come in proper time to hear what Jewks has just now told me. A connection, as she said, between my niece and Lovewell. What can all this mean? Did you perceive——

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Why, Mr. Sterling, don't you see distinctly how the odious woman seeks some victim upon which to wreck her spite. She is a monster, that has vented her last poison at the moment she was quitting you. I answer for my son, as for myself. I know his heart; he is incapable of harbouring any thought unworthy of Clarissa, or himself.

Mr. STERLING. I think so too: but yet——

Mrs. LOVEWELL. But yet? let all this teach you, that my prejudices, as you said they were, against this Jewks, were not ill founded.

Her

Her intention was to drive away all those that might obstruct her, in the plan she had conceived of being mistress here alone. And I again repeat it, Sir, that this is what your celibacy cannot but expose you to, at such a time of life as you have reached.—But this event depresses, I believe, your spirits.—You have not a word to say.

Mr. STERLING (*after a pause.*) The wicked woman! And to such an odious creature have I sacrificed my poor Clarissa! 'Tis too much! Ah, madam, every thing conspires against me. I am cast into despair.—And you too, must set out to-morrow?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Absolutely so. This journey, you are sensible, is not to be avoided. When the ball is over, we shall get into the chariot.

Mr. STERLING. Every circumstance distresses me. A rascal steward, that I thought the best man in the world, has nearly ruined me: a wretched woman, that for fifteen years I had implicitly relied on, proves a monster. I have sent away my niece, that might have proved a consolation to me; and you, madam, with your son, are going both to leave me. I am utterly abandoned; and 'tis now I feel at last the misery of a situation——

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Oh, for shame! call up your spirits. In the ball room you may meet with something to divert your melancholy; for the

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the company, I had forgot to tell you, are assembled, and desire to see you.

Mr. STERLING. I could wish, with all my soul, this ball were farther.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You must positively put away these thoughts. So step into the ball room. I will hurry on my domino, and follow you.

Mr. STERLING. But where is Lovewell?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Don't you be uneasy upon his account. I answer for it Lovewell will be certain to make one.

Mr. STERLING. Ah, madam, I have lost all patience; for to aggravate my case that needs retirement and reflection, I must go and do the honours of a ball.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. What signifies complaining? Go at once. Who knows what fortune may do for you, while the entertainment of the night is going forward?

Mr. STERLING. Nothing, but prepare new subjects of vexation.

ACT

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A C T III.

SCENE (*A room contiguous to the ball room that appears illuminated.*)

Mrs. LOVEWELL, LOVEWELL, and CLARISSA, *all in dominos.*

Mrs. LOVEWELL.

NO, my dear Clarissa, fear you nothing. Under favour of your masque and domino, you may enjoy the pleasure of the evening with your uncle. Lovewell will be with you.

CLARISSA. Ah, my dear, good Madam, how I thank you! but for you, I should have now been got to school, and that is very different.

LOVEWELL. 'Tis I that ought to thank you, mother.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. 'Tis not time as yet for that; but every thing, I hope, will prosper, if you do but follow my directions.

LOVEWELL. That we will not fail to do.

CLARISSA. No certainly, we will not.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*looking at them both.*) Very well.—Should Mr. Sterling see you thus disguised, you need not fear discovery. Have you each your masque about you, ready to put on the moment any one approaches you, particularly Mr. Sterling?

CLARISSA. Yes; here's mine.

LOVE-

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LOVEWELL. And mine too, look you, mother, (*they both mask.*)

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Good! Among the company, take care you don't unmask.

CLARISSA. Oh, you have told us that already, which we shall not easily forget, (*going.*)

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Well? and where would you be going now in such a hurry?

CLARISSA. Where?—Into the ball room, Madam.

LOVEWELL. Yes, into the ball room. 'Tis quite full of company already.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. But I have not yet, I fancy, told you what you are to do when there: Pull off your masks and listen. Your good fortune very possibly depends upon it.

LOVEWELL. I am all attention.

CLARISSA. Oh, my dear, dear Lady!

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You observe my domino.

CLARISSA. Yes, yes; a blue one.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Take no notice then, when such a domino is walking, or in company with Mr. Sterling, who will not be masked: but when you see him with a lady in a sea-green domino and rose-bud trimmings—

CLARISSA. In a sea-green domino, with rose-bud trimmings?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Yes. Then follow at a distance; but not so as to attract his notice, while that domino is with him.

LOVEWELL. We shall take care, mother.

2 L

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. They will come into this room perhaps, and have a little chat together; during all which time, you must observe them at a proper distance, passing to and fro.

LOVEWELL. Yes, yes; I understand.

CLARISSA. And I too, Madam: we will walk about, quite unconcerned, like others.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. And when once you see their conversation over, if the lady (in the sea-green domino I mean) unmasks, then come you up and join them.

CLARISSA. Yes. — You understand your mother, Mr. Lovewell; if the lady should unmask, we must approach.

LOVEWELL. But what are we to say?

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Why, any thing you please. Whatever, as they say, comes uppermost.

CLARISSA. But if the lady, on the other hand, should not unmask.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. In that case, you must follow her into the ball room, where you cannot fail of seeing me, if you remember this blue domino.

CLARISSA. Oh, that we shall.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. And this is all your lesson. So now mask, and go into the ball room; but take note of nothing but the sea-green domino.

CLARISSA. No; no.

(She and Lovewell both go out.)

Mrs. LOVEWELL. What an important moment

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ment this for Sterling! And for me too! and these children likewise, for whose happiness I would provide! Poor Sterling!—But I see him coming.—Let me mask, and place myself where I may hear him: possibly he may say something. *(She withdraws, and Mr. Sterling enters.)*

Mr. STERLING. I am quite tired out. I never in my life saw so much company, or wished more heartily to be delivered of them. Every thing disturbs and even maddens me. Where is it Mrs. Lovewell can be got to, and her son? They are not in the ball room, I am certain. They are from me, at the moment I most want them: but to-morrow, when they once have left me, I shall want them in a very different manner. In proportion as the moment of their going off draws nearer, just in such proportion does the expectation of it more and more affect me. I am then upon the point of being all at once surrendered to a spirit of anxiety. What sorrowful reflections crowd upon me! Where is now that fortitude I looked upon as proof to every species of ill fortune that might happen? Yes, I know myself too late. This celibacy, that has hitherto appeared the happiest state of human nature, has deluded me with nothing but false happiness. Man left entirely to himself becomes an isolated, melancholy being at a time of his existence when the pleasures of the world lose all their power to charm him. He supposes he shall save himself a deal of care and trouble, by

avoiding the vexations of a husband and a father. What infatuation! 'Tis those titles that make life, upon the other hand, desirable, and would inspire him with true courage to discharge its duties.

Mrs. LOVEWELL (*drawing near unmasked.*) Very well, Sir: you are got at last then into such a happy frame of mind as I have wished this long while to behold you in; and after sentiments of this sort, such as truth has just extorted from you, every thing is to be hoped for.

Mr. STERLING. Ah, my dear, good Madam, I had entered into conversation with myself, that I might dissipate the melancholy on me. But where were you? I have been this half hour looking for you.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. I have been up stairs, and chatting with the lady that I spoke of to you. She came early, and has made me promise I will manage matters so, that she may have a tête à tête.

Mr. STERLING. What! in my present state!—a woman I know nothing of!—You are resolved!—Indeed she will not have much reason to be pleased with such a tête à tête as you are pleased to call it. Don't expose us therefore to a conversation I, for my part, shall not any how go through with.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Oh, but I have promised; and for my sake only, were it for no other reason, you will have that complaisance. She will be found at least a friend that
I will

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I will get to stay with you while Lovewell and myself are absent, if she may not hope to be united to you. Come, I know her domino. So, follow me; and I will introduce her to you in the ball room. Come, I say.

Mr. STERLING. I see, I must obey you; but 'tis certain——

Mrs. LOVEWELL. Certain! What? 'Tis certain you are very squeamish: therefore no more scruples.—As the step she takes is rather, one must own, unusual, I inform you she will not unmask; but be assured, her countenance is somewhat pretty.

Mr. STERLING. Be it that or otherwise, 'tis only to oblige you I consent to see her.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. And perhaps you will have cause to thank me when the interview is over.—One thing I had quite forgot to let you know, she has two children; but her fortune is so great, that she can well provide for them, and have enough still left!—And now, I fancy, I have told you every thing.

(They go out, and Lovewell with Clarissa enter on the other side.)

LOVEWELL. There they go, your uncle, and my mother, right into the ball room. We were told, you know, Clarissa, not to heed him. Let us therefore stop and rest ourselves a little. I am almost stifled with the heat. We shall be better, if we take our masks off. Ah! for Heaven's sake, pull off yours, and let me see those

those charming features it hides from me (*he goes to unmask Clarissa.*)

CLARISSA. No, dear Lovewell; your desire is very flattering to one, I must candidly confess; but being, as we are, alone in this apartment, should I gratify you, I might be discovered by my uncle, who supposes me at school by this time. Let us go then once again into the ball room. I, for my part, find it tolerably cool there.

LOVEWELL. Be it so, since you request it: but for Heaven's sake, dear Clarissa, let me see that charming face, though for an instant only. (*he attempts again to pull her mask off.*)

CLARISSA. You insist upon it then.—What, Lovewell, would you force me? (*Struggling.*) Stop.—Again.—And are you not afraid of my displeasure?

LOVEWELL. Ah, Clarissa! Your displeasure would be death to my affection. I request it as a favour; but desist, if, to oblige me, would be painful to you.

CLARISSA. Well then, your submission charms me, and you take the only way to make me grant you such a favour.

LOVEWELL. Let me then obtain it (*repeating his attempt a third time at the mask.*)

CLARISSA. How you tease me! on my honour, Lovewell, (*pushing him away.*) No, if you are positive, I am determined you shall be indebted to me for the favour. There; look at me then a little; but make haste.—Oh, heavens!

vens! here comes my uncle. (*She puts on her mask again.*)

LOVEWELL (*to Clarissa: Mr. Sterling coming in unmasked, without observing them, and in a thoughtful mood.*) Let us shun him this way.

CLARISSA. No: he has not seen us; and our masks will be our safety. It will never come into his head that I am here.—He seems perplexed. If we can counterfeit our voices, we may have the pleasure of conversing with him.

LOVEWELL. Yes; well thought of! He comes here, perhaps to have a little conversation with the sea-green domino,—I should be glad to know——

CLARISSA. And I too: let us therefore watch him, (*they walk to and fro.*)

Mr. STERLING (*after having looked about.*) Mrs. Lovewell, some how or another, has got from me. We were separated in the ball room. If it would but save me from the interview she is resolved on with this lady, I should be less sorry for it. But there walk two masks that turn their eyes upon me, every now and then, I think. (*Approaching.*) 'Tis likely I am one too many here, and will retire.

CLARISSA. No, sir; you cannot possibly be one too many any where. You are the master of this house, and we are sensible how much we owe you. You give others pleasure; but methinks you seem not pleased yourself.

Mr. STERLING. 'Twill sometimes happen
so;

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so:—but you, to judge by your appearance, charming masks, I fancy are much better pleased with being in each other's company, than any ball could make you.

LOVEWELL. It is true indeed. Though your assembly is delightful, we are far more pleased in being with each other.

Mr. STERLING. You are very young, as far as I can guess. And are you frequently together?

LOVEWELL. Hitherto; and we have hopes we shall continue to be so.

Mr. STERLING. You mean, if I conceive you rightly, that a happy marriage is to crown your hopes?

LOVEWELL. Yes; that is what we live in hopes of: and, for my part, I am waiting for so great a happiness with all the impatience you can fancy.

Mr. STERLING. Ah, my children, I congratulate you on your prospects. Yes, sometimes unite your fortune in the honourable tie of matrimony. Why, alas! did I omit to do so at your age? In such a case, I should not now be so unhappy.

CLARISSA. What! are you unhappy, sir? No doubt, for having lived a bachelor so long; for we have heard you are not married.

Mr. STERLING. Such is my condition, that at last I find quite insupportable.

CLARISSA. No doubt, sir, the interest of marriage and the happiness of life is to have children

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children worthy of one : but pray tell me, in defect of these, fir, have you no relation ? for example's sake, no niece ?

MR. STERLING. Ah, there you touch upon a string that hurts me to the heart. I have indeed a niece, and such a niece too ! Would to Heaven she were but here, instead of having been sent off to school !

CLARISSA. Ah, if you love this niece, you do not use her kindly.

MR. STERLING. No indeed ; and therefore, as you hear, I blame myself for having sent her thither, as I did this very evening.

CLARISSA. But you seem so very good, that you will hardly let her stay there any time ? Pray promise me, you will not—

MR. STERLING. With an elegant young man, that I esteem as much as if he were my son, she might have had the same fair expectations as yourself. I could have wished them married, but ill fortune has willed otherwise.

LOVEWELL. Ah, fir, we are quite strangers to you ; but for Heaven's sake, notwithstanding the contrivance of ill fortune, keep in favour of your niece and this young man the happy disposition towards them you are in at present. We can form some judgement of them by ourselves.

MR. STERLING. I thank you for the kind concern you manifest in their behalf.

CLARISSA. Did you but know us, you would say that no concern was ever more sincere.

LOVE-

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LOVEWELL (*pulling Clarissa by the sleeve.*) Here comes the sea-green domino: let us be-gone.

CLARISSA. Farewel, fir; we are going back into the ball room. But before we leave you, let me recommend to your attention that poor niece of yours that you have sent to school.

LOVEWELL. And me too, that young man to whom you could have wished her married.

MR. STERLING. And for my part, I sincerely wish you both no less than all the happiness, I can persuade myself, you merit.

(*Lovewell and Clarissa both go out.*)

MR. STERLING. How it is, I know not: but the conversation I have had with these young people, has enlivened me.—I feel my spirits lighter. (*The lady in the sea-green domino appears.*) But here comes another mask, that seems to eye me very closely. I am mightily afraid 'tis Mrs. Lovewell's friend. Yes, yes; it must be.—I am fairly taken, and must extricate myself as well as I am able!

THE LADY (*after many curtsies.*) My behaviour, fir, would be quite inexcusable, but that the motive is of such a nature as to merit, I can say, your approbation, rather than contempt. My good friend, Mrs. Lovewell, must have mentioned in what high esteem I have this long time looked upon you.

MR. STERLING. Yes, she has so, madam: but believe me, from my youth up till this very hour,

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hour, I have mistrusted my self-love. Besides, I am no longer of an age at present to indulge it. Were it otherwise, I should, while I am speaking now, congratulate myself by reason of that conversation you have wished for with me.

The LADY. 'Tis a long time now since first I wished to have it; and when once a woman comes to such a frank avowal as I mean to make, she should express herself without equivocation, and lay hold of such an unexpected opportunity for speaking, as the present moment offers; which is what I mean to do. I am a widow, sir, and very wealthy; have two children, whose establishment is now upon the point of being settled, without any diminution to my fortune: and as marriage generally sunders parents from the company they most incline to, I must tell you, sir, that for the sake of fellowship, in lieu of what will soon be taken from me, I am fixed again to marry. Do not be offended at my want of delicacy. Such a declaration does you honour, if I say I have this long while placed my choice on you, as on the worthiest man I know. I am acquainted fully with the ruinous condition of your circumstances, and what possibly might have induced another woman to withdraw her favourable notions of a gentleman, is in reality the very reason that prevails on me to make a declaration, on the other hand, of mine. This, sir, is what I think; and what I think of you.

Shall

Shall I have cause to blush at my proceeding? Truly I am much afraid I shall.

Mr. STERLING. No, madam; for your generosity, the delicacy of your soul, and, let me say, the sensibility of mine, all justify your claim to my esteem and gratitude: but you deserve, I must acknowledge, a return much warmer than esteem or gratitude can be.— I seek it in my heart. I ought, and should be even glad to find it; but that heart is not disposed thereto, and I am utterly unworthy of your goodness. Pardon me, if I dare own it. I should be but little sensible of your sincerity, if I did not repay it with the same sincerity on my side.

The LADY. If the case be so, I hope at least you will inform me what is the obstruction to my wishes.

Mr. STERLING. Willingly, good madam. I could never think but that in marriage an equality of fortune is as necessary as congeniality of disposition. One can never bargain for a heart; the market must be unavoidably a bad one; and 'tis too much labour for the heart that has been sold, to find in this esteem and gratitude, those finer feelings marriage presupposes and exacts. This, madam, is an insurmountable obstruction in my situation; and, alas, I am necessitated to oppose it to the generosity and kindness of your offers.

Mrs. LOVEWELL. You are willing, I should understand by this, sir, that if ever you have thoughts

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thoughts of marriage, you will chuse no partner that is richer than yourself?

Mr. STERLING. Yes, madam: that will be my system; add to which, that a reflection would come over to my aid, and keep me in the disarrangement of my fortunes from another inconvenience?

The LADY. And what, pray, is that reflection?

Mr. STERLING. Formerly one might have ventured upon matrimony without much of this world's substance. The simplicity of manners would permit that those not rich should have recourse to some expedients, which were not supposed dishonourable. But at present, when expensive living has impoverished such a multitude of people, I must think it much more prudent to continue single, than expose a wife and children to misfortunes. This idea is not favourable, I confess, to population. I am very sorry for it: yet 'tis this idea that alone makes celibacy now-a-days so fashionable.

The LADY. The reflection seems to me extremely just: but I suspect, that your refusal, which I own is very handsomely expressed, must be occasioned by some other circumstance.

Mr. STERLING. And what can you suspect pray, my good lady?

The LADY. That already you must have a passion for some other woman in your heart, that gives your reasonings all their force and energy. Remember, you have promised you would be

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sincere with me, and I persuade myself I have some title to expect as much.

Mr. STERLING. You put my frankness to a trial of some difficulty. I acknowledge I have promised you sincerity, and mean to keep my word. Yes, madam, I will own there is a woman in the world who would have made me very happy, had my fortune led me to a union with her; and she only can have any right to my affection. At a time more favourable, had I but been wise, I should have made her overtures for such an union; but at present, were she really disposed to favour my presumption, and even make those overtures herself, I would reply by urging the same obstacle as I have done to you.—On which account, I keep myself from thinking of her, otherwise than as a friend.

The LADY. I have no reason to complain, since you would treat this lady no way better than myself. Believe me, you have said enough to make me guess the person that thus interests your heart: but are you sure she has no partiality for you?—Perhaps——

Mr. STERLING. I am persuaded she regards me; but, as sure upon the other hand, that she is far from thinking with what tenderness and love she has inspired me.—A confession I shall now much more than ever keep myself from making to her.

The LADY. Possibly, you push your delicacy in the case too far; but, as I said before, I
guess

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guess the lady you allude to. Still however I should like to have you tell me who she is. I dare assure you, my good sir, that your sincerity would not in the event be looked upon as indiscreet, were you to name her to me.

MR. STERLING. I will do that, madam ; but on this condition, that her name be still a secret after I have told it.

THE LADY. On my honour, it shall never be revealed by me to any living soul.

MR. STERLING. Well then, the lady is no less than Mrs. Lovewell, your good friend herself.

THE LADY (*aside.*) I breathe. (*Aloud.*) 'Tis Mrs. Lovewell then ?

MR. STERLING. Yes, madam ; but remember, you have promised me she shall know nothing of it.

MRS. LOVEWELL (*unmasking.*) Ah, my dearest Sterling, how can she not know it ?

(*Lovewell and Clarissa, at this token, both come up, unmasked.*)

MR. STERLING. What ! How ! Madam ! is it you ?

MRS. LOVEWELL. Yes, sir, myself ; whom your avowal makes the happiest woman living : think not to undo your declaration. You have no retreat. Your happiness, with mine, and that of these before us, all depend on the transaction of this evening.—You are swallowed up in wonder, and cast now and then your eye upon Clarissa. How she happens to be here,
when

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when you supposed her in the country, I will let you know hereafter. For her happiness and Lovewell's too, suffice it I declare they shall tomorrow be united to each other, if, on your part, nothing be objected to prevent it.

Mr. STERLING. Where, where am I? Ah! my good, dear madam, you surprise me!—This so unexpected!—I am—am—My heart will surely burst with such a flood of transport as comes rushing on it all at once!

CLARISSA. My dear, dear uncle, you can start no hindrance to our union, having given us your consent.

Mr. STERLING. How? I?

LOVEWELL. Yes, truly, sir; for we were those two masks that so much recommended both your niece and that young man.—We had our reasons for so doing, as you see.

Mr. STERLING. Ah, my children!—Madam, it would ill become me, and particularly in my present situation, to refuse such generous offers. I am wadded in a moment from a desert to a paradise. May therefore every batchelor, in future, taught by my example, candidly acknowledge that the happiness of life depends on marriage, and that neither of the sexes, who were fashioned for each other, should withdraw themselves from nature to pass life away in celibacy.

